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## INVITATION TO WORSHIP



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By

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*With an Introduction by*

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INVITATION TO WORSHIP

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To  
JAMES WILLIAM LYNCH  
*IN MEMORIAM*





## INTRODUCTION

IT IS OVER FORTY YEARS SINCE FRANCIS GREENWOOD PEABODY published his first series of *Mornings in the College Chapel*. That volume and those which followed it in the same pattern and in the same spirit have become classics of modern American religion. Professor Peabody, in these books, happily did more to commend and interpret the deeper life of Harvard to the wide world than anyone else did at that time, or indeed has since done. Those who have once read *Mornings in the College Chapel* are thereafter held in its spell and kept in its debt. Each of the brief talks, which in delivery occupied not more than five minutes and which in print takes no more than a page or so, is a lively little vignette. These gems were originally in the setting of an entire service, but that entire service was brief. It was held at that time, and is still held, at quarter of nine in the morning, and lasts exactly fifteen minutes. The organist is under orders to sound an "AMEN" on the organ and summon his choir to sing it when the nine o'clock bell strikes, to allow students to go on to their classes. Many a long-winded preacher who has abused the brief time at his disposal has been cut off by this drastic process.

The service is bare and moves with swiftness and precision. It is comprised of: Responsive Reading—Anthem—Scripture Lesson—Address—Prayer—Hymn—Benediction. There are also the Organ Prelude and the Organ Postlude falling outside the fifteen minutes. Many a visiting preacher has looked skeptically at this order of service, doubting whether as much could be compressed

into a quarter of an hour. Meanwhile those who conduct the service regularly and who share in it take a certain amount of keen pride in so ordering the parts of the service that the "AMEN" after the Benediction shall be sung just as the clock in Memorial Hall strikes nine. This means, unless the other parts of the service are to be skimmed, a swift, compact address. One has to have the total setting to understand the true nature and intent of Professor Peabody's chapel talks a generation ago. Wordsworth spoke somewhere of the sonnet's "scanty plot of ground." A chapel talk under the conditions just described has a scanty plot of ground, but for that very reason it often achieves a precision and a beauty which would not be possible if longer time were available.

I have said these things because they furnish the background for the present volume. No one of us who has ministered in the Harvard College Chapel as a successor to Professor Peabody, or who has served as a visiting preacher to the University, would ever dare to think that any chapel talks of his own were fit to be compared to those of his wise and devout predecessor. Professor Peabody set the standard, and we who have come after him have tried to come as near to it as we can.

The tradition, however, still lives, just as the service goes on, and from time to time some man spends long enough with us so that he takes his place among us as one of our acknowledged ministers. That is true of Professor Reid and of the chapel talks included in this volume. He was chaplain at a session of the summer school, and rallied to the regular morning prayers at that time a larger and more loyal congregation than had been common at those services over many years. The response given him

on the ground has warranted him in now offering to a wider public a number of the addresses given at morning prayers here in Harvard, and in supplementing them by some other similar addresses given in like places elsewhere.

Professor Reid is a philosopher. He is at the same time a devout Christian. Many insights into our faith are given him by the disciplines of his profession. One need only turn the pages of this book, glancing at a sentence here and there, to catch first the swift motion of the thought in brief and effective sentences—as fits the necessary form—and to find here also the reassuring second thoughts of one whose mind is accustomed to range far and wide, but who returns constantly and with increasing confidence to the Christian religion. The book is essentially Biblical. Its sources are the earlier books of the Old Testament, the Psalms, and the Prophets on the one hand; then the Gospels and Epistles on the other hand. Professor Reid's sense of values is mature, and from the wealth of Biblical material he has fastened upon truths which endure, and which serve generation after generation.

We at Harvard are therefore happy to have this volume appear, and to find its pages continuing the religious spirit and the formal literary pattern which we associate with *Mornings in the College Chapel*.

WILLARD L. SPERRY,  
*Chairman of the Board of Preachers,  
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# 1

## *Consecration*

O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

Sing unto the Lord, bless his name: shew forth his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.

Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

—PSALM 96:1-9

THE SANCTUARY IS A HOLY PLACE WHERE ONE MAY COMMUNE WITH Almighty God in spirit and in truth. It is sacred ground where man, in faith, consecrates himself to the Eternal and, in love,

dedicates his life to the preservation and development of human rights and liberties.

In this great psalm the writer states that strength and beauty are in the sanctuary. He is contemplating the two massive pillars in the Temple. Tall and majestic, they represent latent and active power. With their capitals adorned with lilies, they are also symbols of beauty. The writer first observes strength by itself. Taken alone, strength is austere, inexorable, awe-inspiring, and potentially dangerous. Unrestrained physical power can become a devastating cyclone or a destructive earthquake. Unbridled thought, appearing in an absolute monarchy, in an undisciplined democracy, or in a religious hierarchy, can impoverish and enslave souls.

The writer likewise observes beauty alone. When unrestricted, beauty may lead to mere empty sentiment or inflammatory emotion, dangerous to an individual and to society. But the psalmist goes further. He sees strength and beauty combined. When they are thus joined, they both restrain and enhance each other, so that there appear the inimitable Greek temple, the glory of the sunset, and the spangled sky at evening.

But the psalmist does not stop with strength and beauty united. He sees them consecrated to God. They are in the sanctuary. It is thus that human personality appears like the reaches of a lofty Gothic cathedral—strong, beautiful, consecrated.

It is fitting, therefore, that we who seek strength and beauty should step apart for a little while to the quietness of the divine sanctuary, that, surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, we may feel the presence of the eternal God and consecrate ourselves to him.

## 2

### *In the Beginning God*

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.  
And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness  
was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God  
moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.  
And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided  
the light from the darkness.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called  
Night. And the evening and the morning were the first  
day.

—GENESIS 1:1-5

THE OPENING STATEMENT IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS IS THE SUBLIMEST sentence in the realm of literature. It includes only ten short words, but the inspired writer of this great epic story let the sentence become so charged with meaning that the reader is amazed.

The pronouncement is far-reaching in time. It specifies a dateless date. It is as a blank date covering all time. The writer leaves ample room for physics, whether one is interested in the most minute particle of physical substance or the far-flung realms of the stars. It provides time for geology, with the vast periods which that field reveals. It affords opportunity for the appear-

ance and development of life, with all the variations which plants and animals may have experienced, and the records which they have left in earth and stone. It leaves an abundance of time for the anthropologist, whatever may be his opinions with respect to the origin and development of man, societies, and types of religion.

Moreover, the writer associates God with creation. He thus leaves no place for the suggestion that the universe is only a fortuitous aggregation of naturalistic substances. Life is not the illusion which Omar cynically pictures as

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste  
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste—  
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reach'd  
The NOTHING it set out from—Oh, make haste!

For the writer, men are not, as Voltaire once passionately exclaimed,

Tormented atoms in a bed of mud,  
Devoured by death, a mockery of fate.

God is the Creator, and he is intimately related to the vast and continuous process of creation. Spirit is dominant over material things; and yet spirit is so intimately associated with material things that every atom and every star cluster bears the signature of deity. In all of the process of creation, from the void and darkness of chaos to the appearance of law that activates the electron and holds the Pleiades together, there is the influence of the divine principle. And, likewise, there appear the highest attributes and aspirations of the human mind and soul—freedom, courage, hope, faith, love—for God hath put eternity in our hearts.

### 3

#### *Prerequisites to Worship*

The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein:

For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

—PSALM 24:1-5

FOR MANY OF US LIFE IS A SUCCESSION OF PROBLEMS AND TESTS OF ability. The psalmist here proposes the most exacting question and the most searching examination that one may confront. He does not ask who will be able to withstand the requirements of the classroom, of professional life, of industry, or of society. The question is this: Who shall be able to stand in God's holy place, exposed by the brilliant illumination of Truth? The answer specifies three necessary personal qualifications.

First, clean hands. The hand is a symbol of work. It represents all that one does. Work may consist of manual labor or

intellectual toil. It may be hard, productive, and honorable; or it may be parasitic, subversive, miserly, or beggarly. The hand also represents progress. Its very shape gives man a vast advantage over lower animals. With the hands instruments of precision are made, the wheels of industry are regulated, thought is recorded and transmitted, governments are established and defended, canvas is transformed into priceless treasures, and marble is converted into immortal beauty. Every normal person is expected to make some contribution. The problem is this: Are my hands made immaculate by work which is honest and constructive? Or are they contaminated by indolence, fouled by dishonor, or so stained by crime that "all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten" them?

The second requirement is a pure heart. The heart is a center of life. It is the power station that sends food and other vital elements to different parts of the body. When the heart becomes feeble, the hands become weak; when it stops, the hands cease to function. The heart is the symbol of the mind, where motives have their substance. Mental infections—as selfishness, intolerance, and intemperance—poison and weaken life, and produce mental and spiritual feebleness. On the other hand, a clean mind is the foundation of character, the essence of refinement, and a sanctuary of knowledge. A clean mind is a source of strength, as Sir Galahad realizes when he says,

My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure.

The third requirement is a contrite heart. Vanity is repulsive. The most intolerable and intolerant thing in the world is religious

vainglory. Christ could not penetrate a heart hardened by it. He knew that a right attitude is prerequisite to worship; so he gave the vivid parable of the Pharisee and the publican. Watch the Pharisee as he goes to the Temple to pray. Hear him say: "Look how good I am; see what fine clothes I wear; note how I tithe; observe how regularly I pray." And then watch the publican as he comes quietly into the presence of God, opens his breast, exposes his heart and lays it down, and says, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Through his humility, he becomes strong.

## 4

### *Prerequisites to Divine Revelation*

And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.

And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.

And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.

For they are impudent children, and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God.

And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

—EZEKIEL 2:1-5

MAN'S HIGHEST PRIVILEGE IS DIVINE COMMUNION. OUR GREAT PRESENT need is divine revelation, for in the midst of vast human accomplishments and perplexing movements it would reveal supreme values and give us a definite purpose.

It must be realized, however, that whether revelation occurs or not depends upon man himself. The experience of Ezekiel



clearly illustrates requirements that one must meet if one is to know the divine will.

First, one must have, in theory and in practice, a right attitude toward man. While no one can afford to be so stupid as to discredit any fine characteristics or accomplishments of man, it should be noted that the Lord did not address Ezekiel as a unit of physical energy, a superior animal, a fine intellect, or a distinguished social or religious leader. He used the words "son of man," which Christ loved to use in referring to himself, and which seem to embrace all of man's essential nature and designate him as immortal soul. It is this standard of respect, dignity, and right which man must follow with reference to himself and in his relationship with others.

Second, a man is expected to stand up. Ezekiel was lying on the ground; his vision was restricted to, and his mind was becoming like, the trash and creeping things before his eyes; and the Lord told him to stand up. God will not invade the sacred precincts of human will and reduce one to the status of a puppet. Nor does he reveal himself to one who voluntarily remains in degrading circumstances.

Third, a man is expected to exercise his own powers. Ezekiel was capable physically, mentally, and spiritually. He was able to quit himself like a man, and the Lord expected him to stand upon his feet. Progress in education, in government, in medical science, and in religion occurs as man endeavors to employ his own ability in these fields. It borders on blasphemy to say that God condones or rewards lethargy, indifference, and ignorance. A request becomes a prayer only when the suppliant is himself

willing to do all within his power to effect an answer to the petition.

When, however, a man actually regards himself and others highly, rises above the trash of life, stands up like a man, and wills to know and do, he has the promise that Jehovah will speak to him and give him a task worthy of a man. Ezekiel arose, heard the divine commission, received divine assurance, undertook a great and difficult task, and was recognized as a prophet of God.

The God of Ezekiel is our God.

## 5

### *Walking with God*

And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

—GENESIS 5:22-24

THE OLD TESTAMENT CONTAINS MANY STRANGE AND UNUSUAL SECTIONS which excite justifiable imagination. The fifth chapter of Genesis reminds one of a burying ground. It resembles a book of epitaphs. As one reads this chapter, one finds one brief statement after another about different men, ending with the words, "and he died"—"and he died"—"and he died." But one suddenly comes upon a strange spot which, at first, seems out of place. It is a plot where there is no grave. No gravedigger's spade has touched it. It is clothed, as Matheson intimates, with perpetual life and beauty. And one finds there a monument, erected not to the dead but to the living. On the monument are these words: "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

If Enoch walked with God, there must have been a time when this expression of fellowship started. Perhaps it began when

Enoch was a youth, for, as a rule, it is in youth that interests are established, habits of mind and body take form, ideals are acquired, and feelings become developed and fixed. An old man, on the other hand, dreams dreams, his habits are settled, scarry tissue of body and mind is plentiful, and he is perhaps afraid to walk in strange high places.

There must also have been an hour and a place for these walks. The garden of the Lord is large, and contains many sections; the day is long, and full of opportunities. With some people the time is morning; with others it is when the sun is at the meridian; with others it is evening. With some the place is by the sickbed; with others it is in the office, the classroom, the workshop, or the orphanage. Some walk with God in the fields; others at the writer's desk, at the organ console, in the line of duty in defense of human rights, or in the quiet sanctuary of prayer. Wherever it may be, if one is hallowed by a spirit of reverence and wills to do the will of God, like the disciples on the way to Emmaus one will in some way feel the presence of the eternal spirit.

Moreover, there must have been communion between Enoch and God. The language used is unknown and immaterial. Perhaps there were no words. With intimate friends there is frequently no need for conversation. Divine communion may be similar to music and art and love, which inspire and ennoble, and have no boundary lines. Communion implies fellowship; the relation is that of host and guest, of a loving father and his son. John describes the situation in these words: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

## 6

### *The Divine Source*

Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

—PSALM 84:9-12

AS A WISE GREEK PHILOSOPHER STATED, WORDS CANNOT CONVEY A CORRECT conception of God. Those who wrote the Bible story frequently used similes and metaphors to specify truths too profound for verbal expression. The psalmist here, in an effort to show the power and benevolence of Jehovah, says, "The Lord God is a sun." What does this metaphor imply?

The sun is the source of light. Physical light illuminates, reveals beauty and wealth, and exposes evils that lurk in dark places. It is the symbol of intelligence, safety, and progress. It is a means of clearing away jungles of disease, and noisome superstition and ignorance. The Lord is not only the author of physical light; he

is also the source of all knowledge, beauty, and progress. Take away the natural sun, and perpetual night will exist. Take away the Lord, and the night of ignorance, selfishness, moral pestilence, and utter hopelessness will prevail.

The physical sun is the source of power. Whence the coal and the petroleum that furnish power to our machines? Whence the cycle of heat, cloud, rain, streams, hydroelectric power that lights our homes and turns the wheels of our industries? And, likewise, whence the divine dissatisfaction of man; the energy and vision that make him look upward and walk forward? Who is the author of the ideals that illuminate mind, the ambitions which intensify generous motives, and the spirit of sacrifice which makes one give his life for that which he believes is right?

The sun is also the source of physical warmth. Through countless millions of years it stored up the fuel which we use. The sun supplants winter's frosts with the resurrection of spring and the harvests of summer and autumn. The psalmist regards the Lord as the source of comfort and joy, and the father of all generous impulses, benevolent enterprises, and humanitarian institutions. From him emanate concepts of "the good, the beautiful, and the true," the ideals of temperance, justice, and right, and all other noble incentives that lead to human advancement. The source may often be unrecognized, for, as Longfellow states,

As torrents in summer,  
Half dried in their channels,  
Suddenly rise, though the  
Sky is still cloudless,  
For rain has been falling  
Far off at their fountains;

So hearts that are fainting  
Grow full to o'erflowing,  
And they that behold it  
Marvel, and know not  
That God at their fountains  
Far off hath been raining!

Furthermore, the sun maintains all life. It is through warmth that natural life is preserved. Remove the sun even for a little while and the earth would become a vast sepulcher. Thus, the psalmist states that God is the keeper of our spiritual life, even through eternity, for, says he, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me."

# 7

## *A Failure*

And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

—GENESIS 13:8-12

IN A BEAUTIFUL PLACE IT IS UNPLEASANT TO SPEAK OF UGLY THINGS. The world, however, is filled with tragedies which one cannot justifiably ignore. Lot is one of the most repulsive failures mentioned in the Bible, for he started well and ended miserably. Lot



had youth, with its resiliency, time, and opportunities. He was well-born, for his uncle, Abram, was the wise, good, and wealthy man who became the father of the Hebrew people. Lot had unusual privileges, for Abram gave him wealth, defended him, and took him to the altar. But he became a pitiable failure. Why?

He was weak in character. He was neither considerate, nor courteous, nor grateful. He accumulated property, but he did not know how to live. There is no evidence that he possessed courage, refinement, or the desire to do right. He did not have the respect of his fellow citizens; and he had no good influence over his own family. He was a coward, and hid himself in a mountain cave. The curtain falls upon his wretched life while he is engaged in drunken, incestuous debauchery.

Lot failed because he had a little, undeveloped soul. He starved his spiritual nature, until his sense of right and decency became weak. He substituted the present for the future, the material for the spiritual. His vision for himself and his family was limited to well-watered plains, grass, and Sodom. From his birth to his death we find in Lot no trace of moral excellence. There is no evidence that he was interested in religion, even though he was associated with a deeply religious man. There is no proof that he ever actually worshiped, or even wanted to worship, although he was familiar with the altar.

Lot is no exceptional case. Esau, a man too weak to control himself, sold his birthright for a meal, and proved himself unfit for leadership. Saul, the first king of Israel, large in body and endowed with other fine characteristics, weakened his soul by harboring arrogance and jealousy, became a paranoiac, and died a miserable failure. The Pharisees, morally precise, scholarly, and

familiar with religious rites, were so dull in spiritual sensitivity that they could not recognize truth, suffering, and duty when they were before their very eyes. Judas was intimately associated with Jesus, but he never knew him. Pilate was clothed with official prestige, but he was nevertheless too weak to resist mob opinion.

Perhaps the gravest danger of the present time is to be found in the neglect of the spiritual; for it is a perilous situation when an individual or a nation is so familiar with temporal power and religions, and at the same time largely overlooks the need for spiritual development.

# 8

## *Little Things*

And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.

And the woman conceived, and bare a son; and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.

And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

—EXODUS 2:1-4

ONE FREQUENTLY FORGETS THAT INCIDENTAL EXPERIENCES MAY BE OF the eternal order. Many of us often become discouraged because it is difficult for us to discover tangible and valuable results of our work. We do not wish our lives to suffer defeat.

In the parable of the talents are these words of promise to anyone who is faithful to the trust of life committed to him: "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." This is a statement of a law of increasing returns, which may operate in two ways. First, it applies to one's per-

sonal life. Demonstrated ability and trustworthiness bring one satisfaction and confidence in one's self, increase strength, and justify larger trusts. Second, one's influence does not cease with death, but extends over many centuries and generations.

Miriam, the little sister of the child Moses, gives us an unusual and graphic illustration of personal worth, and of permanent and expanding influence. As the little girl lingered near the river she was apparently doing nothing, but actually her work surpassed that of the sentinels of a great army.

First, Miriam was alert to the dangers that threatened a helpless child, and so allayed the anxiety of a troubled mother's heart. She was quick to exercise the diplomacy of love, and thus she saved her little brother's life. Moreover, by her faithfulness she was watching over the integrity of her own life; she was faithful to the simple duty assigned her, and thus she developed a spirit which in later years burst forth in songs of triumph.

Second, destiny rested in the palm of her little hand. The little girl did not realize that she was safeguarding one who would become one of the world's greatest organizers, legislators, and leaders of men, and—most of all—a peer among interpreters of God to mankind. She held the key with which the shackles of slavery would be removed from more than a million of her race. She had in her charge a great people, including not only Moses, but Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, David, the author of Ecclesiastes, the writers of the psalms, Paul, and a host of others who, throughout the long centuries, have given the world vast wealth of religion, philosophy, literature, and science.

The Pharaohs built great structures of stone; Miriam helped erect eternal, living pyramids in the mind and heart of mankind.

## 9

### *Good Leadership*

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the King, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

—DANIEL 3:16-18

THE WORLD ADMIRES A GREAT LEADER. GOOD LEADERSHIP IS INDISPENSABLE to progress. In the present conditions of economic, social, and religious perplexity, it would be well to note some characteristics of wise leadership.

The writer of the Book of Daniel paints with bold strokes a scene in which men are tested as by fire and death. The picture exhibits the essential traits of young men who became eminently successful. The young men are captives, subjected to the humiliation of military defeat and bondage; but they attain, nevertheless, an enviable position of influence. What is the secret of their accomplishments?

First, the young men refused to compromise. They would not yield to intemperance with respect to their bodies. They seized the opportunity to train their minds, and became superior intellectually. They also refused to compromise their faith in God. A combination of physical strength, intellectuality, and faith in God gives unusual capacity for great leadership.

Second, these young men were tested and strengthened by ordeals. When the image of gold was dedicated, these young men were the only ones who did not bow in worship. They thus proved that they were not enslaved by custom, crowd psychology, ignorance, or fear of political despots. They were not victims of opportunistic policies, nor were they slaves to expediency. They were not even intimidated by fear of death. When they were brought before the king and given the choice of compromise or death, they replied with words charged with heroism and faith: "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us . . . out of thine hand, O king." That is courage. Then, with sublime insight which transcended reason and any consideration of personal safety, hope of reward, or even escape from oblivion, they expressed their devotion to God and the right thus: "But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." That is faith—faith in its purest sense.

Consequently, they were given places of prominence in Babylon, and they became the means of leading the king and the people of that great nation to a recognition of Jehovah. And to this day, wherever the gospel is preached, their temperance, their courage, their faith, and their leadership are proclaimed.

*Results of Worship*

In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

—ISAIAH 6:1-8

THE DRY FACTS OF LIFE SHOULD BE ENLIVENED BY THE DEWS OF LIVING truth. The cold realism of the world should be warmed by the glow of spiritual experience. Communion with the divine illuminates mind, replenishes strength, and converts motives. To one who desires to know the effects of worship, the experience of Isaiah is pertinent and suggestive. It has four significant characteristics.

First, the majesty of Truth was revealed. Isaiah became aware of God and the glory of God. We frequently suffer from the apparently unavoidable malady of overspecialization. Thus our vision often becomes obscured by a fog of particulars. Truth, therefore, seems restricted to phenomena; values appear commensurate with power and size; and one follows with vanishing hope an apparently dwindling road of human worth. One needs, therefore, to have the larger view, and to hear in one's soul the profound undertones of a spiritual world symphony, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."

Second, Isaiah experienced humility. There are situations in which the mediocre seems superior. But when one stands in the presence of Perfection one perceives one's limitations, and with John Charles McNeill cries out:

We know, O Lord, so little what is best.  
Wingless, we move so lowly;  
But in thy calm, all-knowledge let us rest,  
O, Holy, Holy, Holy.

Third, Isaiah was purged as by fire. It was as when one looks upon a great landscape of mountain or sea, reads a great poem, hears sublime music, or associates with a great personality, and



then yearns to substitute the perfect for the imperfect, the beautiful for the ugly, the good for the bad, and to be guided by truth as lovely Beatrice conducted Dante "along the terraces of heaven." When, before the altar, one's soul cries out, the good request will be heard, and one will be touched by the refining fire of forgiveness, sincerity, beauty, and goodness.

Finally, Isaiah gained a new conception of himself. Like Alice in Wonderland, man has in late years been nibbling at something that has reduced him to a feeling of insignificance. But when one stands in the presence of the Lord one is no longer a "frail creature of the dust"; no longer the "stuff that dreams are made on"; no longer an incident designed to pass into the "tongueless silence of the dreamless dust." One realizes that he is a part of creation, made in the image of God, a co-worker with God. And one thus stands with fearlessness and dignity in the face of vast opportunities and needs, and says, "Here am I; send me."

# 11

## *Spiritual Insight*

And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

—LUKE 2:25-30

SPIRITUAL TRAINING, WHEN COMPARED WITH MANY TYPES OF MODERN human accomplishments, appears to be exceedingly backward. In view of all of life's difficult problems the most significant theorem one may confront may be stated thus: Given mind and soul, to discover Truth.

Recognition depends upon training. Perception occurs in terms

of mental development. The physician has been taught to detect symptoms of disease; the mariner has become familiar with his charts; one has learned the language which one understands. Likewise, spiritual capacities must be developed. One must meet certain conditions of spiritual growth and insight if one is to become able to recognize the divine.

Simeon was a just man. He endeavored to do right. He probably made many errors, for then, as now, it was a difficult matter either to know or to do what was right. But he was honest in motive. He did not, as did so many others, let his vision become obscured by the fog of selfishness. The crowds who followed Jesus to be fed, or through mere curiosity, never actually saw him. The lawyer who tried to trick him, the priest and the Levite on the road to Jericho, and the Pharisees who robbed widows never knew him. The spiritual realm detests such evil motives, as nature abhors a vacuum. But a sincere and unselfish person, whether it be a widow bereaved, a blind man groping, or a scholar searching, will know that the Master is near.

Moreover, Simeon was devout. This does not imply weakness; it is rather a source of power. Abraham was a devout man; Moses was a devout man; Daniel and Paul and Isaiah were devout men; and what intellectual and spiritual giants they were!

Furthermore, Simeon had faith. This does not imply that he never doubted. One who never doubts perhaps never thinks seriously. He who has no doubts likely never stops to reflect upon the universality of suffering, tragedy, injustice, and death, and the apparent silence of God. There were many things which Simeon never understood. He probably spent many hours bitterly reflecting upon Roman oppression and the evils of his own people.

But he was a just and devout man, and in some way he knew that he would see the Lord's Christ.

In our perplexities, what does the Lord require of us but "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with . . . God"?

# 12

## *A Decision*

And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

If thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee;

And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

And Jesus, answering, said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. —LUKE 4:3-12

A SERIOUS PERSONAL PROBLEM IS THIS: TO WHAT END SHALL I LIVE? One passes this way only once, and one should possess the wisdom, the vision, and the determination necessary to choose wisely. The example of Jesus, when he had to make a decision in face of severe and comprehensive temptations, is worthy of serious consideration.

Jesus was tempted to compromise his divinity. He reflected upon his ability to work wonders by devoting his life to the realm of the natural world. What prowess of leadership in this field could be his! Jesus never discredited truth in any form in which it manifests itself. Christianity offers the finest challenge the world knows for intelligent investigation and creative work. A Christian may, therefore, regard all truth as God's truth, and he need not be afraid to explore or to discover. But Jesus saw beyond physical things. For him, spirit is prior to matter and values transcend things; and he utters those words which should now be heard in every part of modern civilization: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God."

He also had the opportunity to become a political leader capable of throwing off the Roman yoke and becoming the governmental master of the world. Christ approved government. He taught respect for authority and the law. He paid tribute to Caesar, called a tax collector to become his disciple, and found greatest faith in a Roman officer. But, with perfect vision, he saw beyond political power. His kingdom was not to be a temporal one; it would have no physical boundaries; it would exert no force except that of enlightenment and love. He therefore refused to worship before a political altar. Said he: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Then, too, he was tempted to compromise his religious leadership. To him came such temptations as these: Proclaim yourself the official leader. Exhibit your power. Use spectacular methods. Magic attracts. Issue official orders. Become the supreme, arbitrary ruler of a world-wide religious empire, and require that men be just and good. Jesus knew that religious organizations are indispensable. He established the Church, and the Church is his. But he realized that regeneration and the kingdom of righteousness would occur, not through the employment of external force, mechanics, creeds, or dogmas, but through enlightened love within the hearts of individual men and women.

So, resolved never to give primacy to the temporal, he made the choice of devoting his life to the establishment of a kingdom of love, although the decision would carry him to the cross; and it is not strange that the record states that he returned to his people "in the power of the Spirit."

# 13

## *A Personal Program*

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

—LUKE 4:16-19

ANY THOUGHTFUL PERSON WOULD WANT TO CHOOSE A CAREER THAT IS honorable and constructive. He needs to feel that the major premise of his life is sound, and he wishes assurance that his work is in keeping with that premise. One does not wish, therefore, to come to old age uneasy and remorseful, and with suspicions and alarms about a misspent life crowding upon him. At the outset of his ministry, after Jesus had decided what his ministry should be, he went to his home church and stated his program in the



briefest and most comprehensive of great inaugural addresses.

He specifies the dominant motivation of his life. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." Jesus had experience with God. He thus became aware of the fact of Jehovah, and in the glowing light of his communion with God he clearly recognized his own divinity. Through that experience his soul became aflame, and there no longer remained any condition of uncertainty. Socrates knew something of this type of experience. Abraham, as he set out to found a new people, felt it. Moses was so amazed by its glory that he removed his shoes, for he felt that he was on holy ground. Saul of Tarsus was blinded by its brilliance and transformed by its loveliness. It is a dynamic attraction that may be characterized as an all-illuminating love. It is power that increases with consumption; an idealism that impels one to place the permanent above the temporal, right above duty, and principle above comfort.

Jesus next outlines for himself a daring, sane, and humanitarian program. It is selfless in interest, and it is the boldest and most comprehensive plan ever adopted. He specifies, or implies, every field of worthy human endeavor. The program includes every need of body, mind, and soul. Let the teacher, the physician, the home builder, or anyone else sincerely examine it in the light of the problems of human welfare. The Christian ethic, therefore, is not an abstraction; it does not function in a social or a spiritual void. For Jesus, spirit is real; life is real; and Christian obligations are as positively fact as are life and its needs. Consequently he reveals high standards, indicates inescapable obligations, and outlines the objectives of the divine principle, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

And throughout his life the fact of his Messiahship is attested by his spirit and his work. For example, John sent a commission to him to inquire if he was the Messiah. With supreme confidence Jesus said to the messengers: "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

# 14

## *Christ a Gentleman*

And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

—MARK 14:3-6

A GENTLEMAN POSSESSES UNAFFECTED REFINEMENT, OBSERVES THE niceties of life, and is highly sensitive to values and needs. Think for a moment of the gentility of Jesus.

Jesus was offended by crudeness, sham, and hypocrisy. There was no place in his life for veneer of character or conduct. His words cut like a surgeon's lancet and his look is as a flaming sword when he meets the superficial. Hear him speak of foundations of sand. Listen to him as, with righteous indignation, he exclaims: Blind guides; hypocrites; whited sepulchers; dead men's

bones! And yet he uttered not a word of reproof to the Roman soldiers who, in the line of duty, drove the spikes through his hands and feet.

Jesus was highly sensitive to need. Watch him as he moves among the poor of body, mind, and spirit. Observe him as, with keen sensitivity, he feels the presence of the blind, the crippled, the brokenhearted, and the insane. Irrespective of personal hunger, fatigue, or suffering, he never refused to hear or to grant a good request.

Moreover, Jesus appreciated the lovely conditions of life. He spoke of the beauty of the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. He loved good homes and visited them. At the wedding at Cana he would not permit his host and hostess to suffer embarrassment. He immortalized thoughtfulness when Mary of Bethany broke the alabaster box of ointment in his honor.

Finally, his attitude toward woman was one of refinement, respect, and honor. He called Herod a fox, and he used the prodigal son, the unjust judge, and other men as bad examples. But he never used a woman as an illustration of crudeness or evil. He never asked a woman an incriminating question, or caused a woman to experience humiliation. Through kindness he let a sinful woman bathe his feet with her tears of penitence; and on another occasion he stooped and wrote on the sand rather than embarrass an accused woman. At the death of Jairus' daughter he drove out the professional mourners, and then took the father and mother into the room so that the little girl would see familiar faces when she awoke; and when he asked her to arise, he spoke to her gently in her native tongue. The last request he

made from the cross was in the interest of his mother. And, on the resurrection morning, with all gentleness he called Mary by her first name.

Jesus was a gentleman.

*Idealism in Motherhood*

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

—JOHN 19:25-27

A NOBLE REQUEST IS ESSENTIALLY RELIGIOUS.

The last words which Jesus addressed to man from the cross imply a relationship, a graciousness, and an idealism which should never be overlooked.

The mother is both parent and teacher. She bears this relation to the adult as well as to the child, for her influence persists in one's ideals, and in one's chosen work. Her presence, as some of us know, is frequently more powerful when her physical body has been taken away. One is never separated from his mother's heart. Some children enter colleges and universities and become scholars; some enter business and accumulate wealth; some enter military service and fearlessly face death; some enter public life

and are elected to high office; and some become missionaries and go to remote places. But wherever they are and whatever their accomplishments, they are still children at their mother's feet.

A mother's love is idealistic. Woman, at her best, intuitively places right above expediency, hope above logic, and sacrifice above comfort. This altruism, so deeply embodied in motherhood, is said to be a source of morality and ethics. The ebb and flow of tides of civilization seem to be commensurate and coincident with the degree of recognition of such ideals and devotion to them.

A mother's love is often inarticulate. As when Hannah prayed with voiceless lips, a mother's yearning is often deeper than speech, her feeling is frequently purer than reason. The profound longing of a mother's heart is Godlike, for, in purity of motive and in lofty unselfishness, it resembles the divine. As a sublime minor chord, it reminds one of that grand statement:

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

A mother is a refuge. In this refuge no incriminating questions are asked. Society asks them: Who is he? Where does he come from? The business world asks them: What has he? Is he trustworthy? The law asks them: Has he violated the law? What is the evidence? School faculties ask them: Has he ability? Has he character? What does he know? But a mother is all-merciful; her interest is tempered by a boundless love.

A mother's idealism never grows old. Her body grows old. It

becomes weak and stooped; her steps falter; her face becomes wrinkled; her hair becomes white; her heart wears out; her mind may weaken and her thoughts falter. But her heart is the same always toward her children. Like the gates of heaven, as stated in John's Revelation, her heart is "not shut at all by day: and there is no night there."



# 16

## *An Epitaph*

And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

But God said unto him, Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

—LUKE 12:16-20

AN EPITAPH ON A MEMORIAL IS USUALLY PREPARED BY A FRIEND. More often than not it is an expression of kindness. It therefore may or may not give a correct appraisal of the deceased. But the inscription which every person etches in the texture of his own soul is an infallible record, as read in the light of an eternal principle.

In this story a man asks Jesus to make his brother divide his

inheritance with him. Christ does not grant the request, for he never employs external force to regulate one's business affairs or to settle legal controversies. He does not dictate with reference to social or economic procedure; nor does he arbitrarily stop even atrocious human conflicts. Jesus does, however, seize the opportunity to teach a profound lesson about life and death. He gives the parable of the rich planter, as a means of showing an attitude which causes the atrophy of a soul.

This wealthy planter surveys his large plantation with its fertile soil and abundant crops. He feels justifiable pride in his accomplishments. He exhibits a commendable spirit of progress when he plans to improve his physical holdings, prevent waste, and conserve what his labor has produced. There is nothing wrong with honest labor, industriousness, thrift, and foresight. One who plants, cultivates, produces, and conserves honorably is working with God in his garden, whether it be on a plantation, in the classroom, or elsewhere.

But what is the trouble with this man? The record is clear. Note how he says, "I, I; my, my." He thought within himself, "my room," "my barns," "my fruits," "my goods," "my time," "my ease," "my food," "my drink," "my merriment." He was so nearsighted that he could see only his physical property and plan only for his own comfort. His conception of life was materialistic and pragmatic. He was so ignorant of his essential nature and needs that he felt that happiness could be had through property and sensuous gratification. He was so restricted in reason and limited in feelings as to be interested primarily in his own physical welfare. He was so inconsiderate of refinement and

genuine values as to send his soul to live in a barn. Selfishness left no place in his life for love or benevolence.

It is a dreadful matter to violate divine law. The planter's soul atrophied. And on the tomb of his tragic and spiritually empty life appears the epitaph which he himself wrote, and which Jesus read—"Thou fool."

# 17

## *Divine Peace*

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

—JOHN 14:27

THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE REGARD RELIGION AS A MEANS OF ESCAPE from responsibilities and fears. Christ, however, recognizes two kinds of peace.

There is peace such as the world gives. This type may be had through various commendable channels. One thinks of industry and adequate finances, preventive and curative medicine, inventions, and organizations which remove burdens from the backs of vast numbers of people. One also includes such matters as professional success, social position, friendships, and culture. He, moreover, recalls intellectual attainments which have cleared away jungles of ignorance, with their dangers, superstitions, and fears, even in religion.

But no mere human accomplishment can give the permanent and ultimate satisfaction which man requires. The depths of the soul demand something more. Information and feelings are inadequate. The more one learns empirically, the less one seems

to know. No reputable scientist or philosopher now dares be dogmatic about his field. Nothing seems stable. Even civilizations appear to ebb and flow. Paul was correct in his assertion that prophecies shall fail, tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall vanish away. However fine it may be, that peace which the world offers is restricted, partial, and transient.

But Jesus offers peace that is abiding. This does not mean mere complacency. He said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." So long as there are ignorance and evil, he requires that a Christian enter the conflict. As long as large sections of the human family are enslaved, one who is content suffers either from ignorance or a measure of depravity. Besides, who is it that is worthy of the name Christian who wishes complacency? As Browning says, "Was the trial sore? Temptation sharp? Thank God a second time!" Does one suppose that Florence Nightingale sought physical or mental ease? Or General Booth? Or Livingstone? Or Schweitzer? Or Kagawa? Jesus himself had no place to lay his head; he was misunderstood; members of his own family did not believe in him; people of his home town tried to kill him; in the hour of his greatest agony his disciples went to sleep, and in danger they deserted him; finally he was tortured and killed. Then, what is this peace he promises?

Plato shows something of its nature when he states that an unjust man, although he may attain wealth and prestige, and seem to be the justest of men and the most favored of the gods, cannot know it; but that a just man, although he be misunderstood, experience slander and suffer torture, may be happy.

Jesus promises a peace, then, that surpasses all definition, de-

scription, and understanding. It is an inner serenity of the soul. He himself found this divine peace as a consequence of his utter unselfishness, the devotion of his life to a great cause, and his absolute loyalty to his heavenly Father.

*Jesus and Woman*

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

—JOHN 4:21-26

IT IS FREQUENTLY STATED THAT CHRISTIANITY HAS BROUGHT ABOUT emancipation of woman. What was the attitude of Jesus toward her? Let us enumerate some suggestive facts.

Jesus regarded every person as an immortal soul. He thus emphasized the fact of an equality of mankind in the sight of God. For him, this fact holds, irrespective of sex, nationality, or

race, and forbids unfair discrimination. By precept and example he grants a Magna Charta to woman, and establishes the right of every individual to rise to the highest intellectual and spiritual levels of which he or she is capable.

He recognized the needs of woman as well as those of man. He never approved evil; and he never condoned civic or legal discrimination against woman. He heard the plea of the father of an epileptic son; and he answered the prayer of a woman of Canaan in behalf of her daughter. He heard the call of a blind man; and he felt the touch of a poor, ill, superstitious woman. He responded to the distress of a rich ruler; he likewise, as recorded in the most pathetic sentence ever written, had compassion on a widow whose only son was dead.

Jesus also recognized the unselfish spirit of woman. He knew the benevolent heart of the poor widow who dropped all her money into the treasury; and he said of her that she gave "all that she had, even all her living," thus uttering perhaps the highest tribute ever paid one for a generous act, and attributing to woman at her best such idealism as merits our adoration.

Moreover, he recognized the intelligence of woman. He never discredited practical necessities, but he told Martha that her sister, Mary, had chosen that good part which should not be taken away from her. He thus showed that he appreciated Mary's capacity and hunger for food proper to the mind and the soul, and placed his approval on an intellectually and spiritually developed womanhood.

Furthermore, Jesus appreciated the graciousness of woman. He established an everlasting memorial to her who broke the costly box of ointment in his honor. The world is full of the matter of



fact, the practical, the pragmatic—perhaps relatively too full of such. Judas wanted to exchange loveliness for money—a Judas would. But the aroma of Mary's gracious sentiment, bearing the stamp of divine approval, now in a thousand ways pervades the world wherever the gospel is preached.

Finally, Jesus recognized woman's spiritual worth. It was to the woman at the well that Jesus gave the first clear proclamation of his Saviourship. It was also to her that he made that tremendous pronouncement which delocalized, denationalized, and deracialized God. Said he to her, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

And it must be stated here that no woman who knew Jesus ever said an unkind word about him.

## *The Challenge of Christianity*

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy:

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

—MATTHEW 5:43-48

THE WORLD IS FASCINATED BY A GREAT CHALLENGE. IT IS AN HONOR to be confronted by a great opportunity which tests courage and ability. The idea of the tallest skyscraper beckons, and man builds the structure. The North and South Poles, bristling with cold weapons of death, say "Come on," and man goes. The stratosphere says: "Try your feeble wings up here. Come if you dare,

and I will blind your senses and burst your lungs." And men go up there.

Then, why are so many indifferent toward Christianity, and why do some feel that it is fit only for women and children and the sick? It is because they do not recognize it as the most exacting and the worthiest challenge extended them. Let me specify.

Christ proposes the highest personal standard ever conceived. His ideal embodies no compromise of body, mind, or spirit. As those who would climb Everest must be prepared for the arduous conquest, so those who follow Christ must, in so far as is possible, be fit in intelligence, spirituality, and courage. This is his standard: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." He demands complete devotion to truth and right and goodness, wherever and whenever found. Hear him say: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

Moreover, Jesus demands the highest standard of social responsibility. It is a rule of absolute fairness. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Loyalty to his idealism in this imperfect world requires vision, courage, patience, and suffering. Love thine enemy; go the second mile; turn the other cheek; forgive. Let your light so shine upon your good works that others will see them and glorify God. There is no intimation of weakness here. It requires real character and genuine fortitude to do such things.

Finally, Jesus challenges us to establish principles of right, justice, and love in every part of the world. This includes our

homes, our communities, and every other part of the world. It embraces people of every race and color, of every social and political stratum, and of every moral, ethical, and religious belief. It does not imply proselyting for organizations as such. The requirement is that of eliminating disease, ignorance, strife, and suffering of all types; and replacing these evils with intelligence, peace, and good will. It is a challenge worthy of any person at his best.

## *The Christian Task*

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.

—EPHESIANS 6:10-13

THE PROFOUND AND DEVOUT APOSTLE PAUL CAUTIONS AGAINST restricting religion to trivial matters, when colossal issues are at stake. The struggle now, as then, is with major issues of personality, human relationships, and faith. Let me specify.

By various devices man has been haunted by a low conception of himself. From the days of Vesalius, da Vinci, Copernicus, Newton, Harvey, Darwin, and Wundt, despite vast progress in science and technology, he has been harassed by the thought of his own insignificance. In time and space, he seems negligible;

biologically, he appears to be different from other animals only in degree; and psychologically, some would reduce man to a purely naturalistic status. For example, a popular psychologist writes thus: "Let it be said once and for all that mind is nothing over and above bodily responses." Obviously, there is the colossal task of leading man intelligently to regain high respect for himself, by realizing that, after all, he is essentially a spiritual entity.

Confidence in human relationships must be restored. Distrust, like creeping paralysis, causes dreadful unrest. One speaks of economic recovery, a social Utopia, world peace, and universal brotherhood. These things cannot obtain under the present conditions of selfishness, distrust, and fear. Treaties will continue to become scraps of paper until motives are changed. Coercion will never establish, or guarantee, human justice. Arbitrary external force, civil or religious, will neither make men good nor provide a condition of permanent safety. Jesus was right in teaching that men must first become good in motive. The really great man is he who works to the end of making man's motives Christ-like.

The educational process must become so balanced as to establish deep and correct conceptions about God and man's relation to him. Recently I asked more than two hundred young men—college juniors and seniors—to submit a list of the three most serious problems they now confront in the field of religion. These men came from so-called Christian homes, and, for the most part, belonged to various prominent religious organizations. In the order of frequency, these men replied with the following questions:

1. Is there a God? If so, is he personal, or merely cosmic law?

2. Was Christ divine in any peculiar way?
3. Is affiliation with a religious organization necessary or advisable?

These responses reflect, not atheism, but a general condition of perplexity; and they point toward a basic cause of the confusion and the irregularities now existing in the field of education.

The fight now is with principalities and powers, and with evils in the high places.

*The Universal Christ*

Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.

Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

—JOHN 9:24-31



FIVE HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE CHRIST, XENOPHANES, A GREEK PHILOSOPHER, revealed dangers arising from a poor conception of God. Francis Bacon urged the destruction of mental idols of custom and prejudice which, he believed, were substituted for truth. Among the greatest obstacles to spiritual growth are fixed attitudes and misdirected loyalties. For example, familiarity with the Bible frequently prevents intelligent interpretation and illumination; words like love and salvation lose their meaning, and catchpenny phrases and feelings predominate. The young man whose sight was restored discovered, without fully realizing it, two facts.

He learned that religion is not primarily a matter of traditional beliefs and practices. He did not even recognize the man Christ when he saw him; the vital fact of his mercy was enough for him. On the other hand, the very moral, highly scholarly, and rigidly orthodox Pharisees had permitted their devotion to great traditions and a magnificent code of law so to blind them that they regarded Christ as a sinner and finally brought about his death. Jesus profoundly respected civil law, religious organizations, and wholesome customs. Yet, suffering always aroused him, and his ears were never deaf to a cry of distress. For him, the Fatherhood of God and human need were infinitely more significant than opinion or custom.

The young man also learned the profound truth that Jehovah is not a provincial God. When the scales of blindness had fallen from his eyes he said, "If any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." Saul of Tarsus, after a struggle, discovered this fact. Simon Peter reluctantly learned it, and in an inspired moment exclaimed, "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh

righteousness, is accepted with him." Jesus never had any question about the universality of God. He never asked about one's nationality, social or financial status, or religious affiliation. He suggested that, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine"—whether it be John, Plato, Marcus Aurelius, or Epictetus.

And thus, for illustration, it was with such knowledge that Socrates risked his life in defense of his country, refused to participate in injustice at peril of death, gave the first and greatest discourse on the immortality of the soul, feared nothing except that he might do an unholy or unrighteous thing, and walked majestically into eternity. And Spinoza, who never uttered an unkind word in the face of abuse and suffering, passionately sought and found the eternal God.

The garden of the Lord is large. Anyone having the will to do the will of God may walk therein and share its loveliness.

*God as Father*

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

—REVELATION 3:20-21

THIS GREAT VERBAL PICTURE PRESENTS THREE FACTS RELATING TO THE boundless grace of the Lord.

First, it represents the Christian's God as a Friend and Father who is always ready to aid his children. This is the highest conception of deity. Philosophers have offered many superb statements, but one finds it difficult to worship cosmic law, universal reason, or a supreme monad. Great religions other than Christianity name excellent attributes of deity, but in most cases God is designated as one who has to be sought, aroused, and persuaded to respond. Jesus represents, verbally and by his own life, God as a loving Father who is constantly ready to help. His grace is boundless. The parable of the lost coin and the parable of the lost sheep are efforts to teach his fatherhood. The heart of the parable of the prodigal son is not the wayward boy; it is the bro-

kenhearted father. Jesus himself, in a thousand ways, exhibits this divine attitude. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings."

Second, it presents man's obligation to hear and to open the door. Christ will not break down the door. There are few things as strange, as tragic, or as needful as man. But God will not trespass upon the sacred precincts of personality and thus violate man's freedom. There is no evidence that Christ ever aided anyone who was able to help himself, until that person himself first expressed a desire for help. And then Jesus would not pauperize a human life by ignoring its capacity. He usually required an expression of initiative. Hear Christ say: "Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk"; "Stretch forth thy hand"; "Go and show yourselves unto the priests"; "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." Jesus never denied a good request, but he also never forced himself upon any person, weakened anybody's self-respect, or made anyone poor in spirit.

Third, to those who do seek him there is the definite promise of divine communion and fellowship. There are no restrictions of time or place. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him." The ground before the Cross is level, and it is an area large enough to accommodate all who come there seeking divine grace and fellowship.

## *Admission to the Kingdom of Heaven*

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying,  
Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in  
the midst of them,

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted,  
and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the  
kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little  
child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

—MATTHEW 18:1-4

IT IS CHARACTERISTIC OF MEN, AND PERHAPS OF SOME WOMEN ALSO, to argue and to express preferences. The disciples disputed about the kingdom of heaven. As people so often do, they thought of it in terms of this world. They even made such distinctions of rank in heaven that a Burke's Peerage would be necessary for the proper arrangement of seatings and processions. Having such erroneous conceptions, they asked Jesus this question: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Knowing their attitude, Jesus placed a little child before them, and, with words that burn like muriatic acid, replied, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." The little child, then, gives a clear illustration of requirements for admission.

The child is sincere. He knows nothing about the motives of dishonesty and deception. He does not practice duplicity or hypocrisy. The child's motives are pure. And, thus, free from the weakening and distorting effects of insincerity and sham, the child possesses an attitude which is Godlike in its nature.

Moreover, the child is democratic. He makes no distinctions based on money, social position, or race. Some of us have played with children of other races; and, unashamed, we have wept at the grave of our black mammy. The child has no vanity or unwholesome pride that poisons like a reptile's venom. The little child is unselfish, until he is taught selfishness; and selfishness is a foe of happiness. Furthermore, the little child is receptive. Theodore Roosevelt, in speaking of prejudiced and biased adults, once referred to the infinite capacity of the human mind to resist the reception of information. Dogma, creed, prejudice, and provincialism have brought strife and horror to large sections of the human family, and have kept hosts of people from entering the kingdom of heaven. But a child is eager to learn. His eyes are undimmed; his ears are wide open; his brain is not set. With no impenetrable shell about his mind, he learns and is happy.

Again, through his purity of heart the little child is powerful. His tiny hand can restrain a giant; his cry can annul the decree of a Pharaoh; his smile can transform lives.

Finally, the little child is trustful. He has confidence in those who have him in charge. His life holds no scars of disillusionment. And he has a pure and simple faith in God. As we grow older, some of us, in many respects, will likely pass around the circle through criticism and doubt, and finally come back to the simple faith first learned at our mothers' knees.

## *The Magnetism of Christ*

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.

If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

—JOHN 12:25-32

CHRIST MAKES THE AMAZING CLAIM THAT HE, IF HE BE LIFTED UP before the world, will draw all men unto him. Of what does his magnetic power consist?

A magnet attracts material within its field. Likewise, a great personality affects those about him. Christ's power was tremendous. Scholars marveled at him, even as a youth. Lawyers came to him. Greeks visited him. Scribes and Pharisees hated him, but could not escape him. Homes welcomed him. Children loved him. The afflicted cried unto him, and the distressed turned unto him for comfort. The basis of such attractiveness is obvious—he was the finest personality the world has ever known.

A magnet also rearranges materials affected by it. For example, observe the movements of iron filings or a needle brought near a magnet. Such adjustment occurs when human lives are touched by Perfection. When one has seen the canvas of a master, and when one has walked with Plato and Browning, Shakespeare and Emerson, one's ideals are higher. Let Bach and Beethoven and Wagner speak with their imperishable and universal language, and musical jargon will be heard in the setting it deserves. When one associates with a great personality, one is thereafter never quite the same.

His perfect personality, then, is one explanation of the power of Jesus. Look at him. He was most ambitious, but never compromised or made a mistake. He mingled with all classes, but never stooped or became spotted by sin. He taught, and spoke with such authority that a word from his lips was final. He had enemies, but with a simple statement he sent them away convicted; and with a few pieces of cord he drove money-changers from the Temple. He confronted dangers, but never exhibited fear. In the crises of life and death he never moved in haste, but walked as though earth and time were his, and as if the spangled heavens were in his hand. Yet, little children were attracted to



him; and he wept with friends. With boundless love he prayed for those who were killing him, saying that they did not know what they did.

To know the Master, as he was and as he is, effects a glorious fascination and a marvelous transformation. Is there any wonder, then, that Zacchaeus, when he knew Christ, said: "The half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded any person, I now restore him fourfold." Or that a Roman centurion, as he stood near the cross, exclaimed, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

*Self Mastery*

And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

—LUKE 9:23-25

A PASTOR ONCE ASKED LYMAN ABBOTT TO ADVISE HIM HOW TO TEACH his people spirituality. The great man replied, "First, be spiritual yourself." It needs to be realized that intelligence, character, and mature spirituality are not gifts. They must be acquired, usually through difficulties.

The Cross is a symbol of suffering. For Jesus it meant physical pain, desertion, betrayal, mockery, and injustice. But he glorified the Cross by giving it a much deeper meaning. For him it meant vision, courage, faith, patience, love, and triumph.

In the first place, Jesus knew life, with all of its conflicting experiences. He recognized the preciousness of the individual man, and he did not discredit man's personal resources. He was unlike

some schools and churches which should erect on their grounds a monument to the lives and minds they have stifled and buried. Jesus did man the honor of regarding him as capable of growth, endurance, and other fine attributes. And so, in this world where man is surrounded by inaction and progress, decay and growth, suffering and joy, death and life, he expects man to become victorious through conflicts. He would not have man become flimsy and feeble in will, weak and unstable in character, or dwarfed in spirituality. Life is too sacred; problems are too real.

He therefore says, "Take up thy cross." It is one's own cross of which he speaks. Is it indifference which is one's cross? Then master that danger. Is it impatience, intolerance, or selfishness? Then control that evil. Is it physical poverty? Endure it; for there is the wealth of intelligence, self-respect, and a good name which is worth more than much fine gold. Is it financial wealth? Control it; do not let it make of you a human puppet. Is it time? Then master time, and with spiritual alchemy transform the passing minutes into living and enduring gold.

Moreover, Jesus says, "Take up thy cross daily. Habits of body and mind are not changed in a day. Character is not acquired instantly. Salvation from unwholesome inclinations is not attained in a moment. Just as some of us who feared tuberculosis took daily breathing exercises and developed powerful lungs, so it is imperative that one take up one's cross continually, and, whatever it may be, gradually master it.

Finally, Jesus shows the direction one should carry one's cross. Some people move in one direction; others in another direction. When they confront difficulties, some go toward bitterness and

despair; some toward vindictiveness or beggary; and others toward resignation to what they call an unkind and unfair world. Jesus, himself setting the example, says, "Follow me"—in faith, in courage, in humility, and in love.

## 26

### *Shadows*

And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

—Acts 5:12-15

THE NATURE AND THE INFLUENCE OF SHADOWS TOO OFTEN REMAIN unappreciated. What are some characteristics and effects of shadows?

First, a shadow is dependent upon a source of light. In complete darkness there are no shadows; in poor light, shadows are faint and difficult to distinguish; in brilliant sunlight, they are distinct and sharply outlined.

Moreover, a shadow is dependent upon an opaque object. There must be some solid medium from which the shadow is projected. A transparent substance casts no shadow.

Moreover, the nature of a shadow, including its color, its shape, and its intensity, is influenced by the background upon which it falls. More often than not, it is observed as a part of the surface on which it appears.

Finally, shadows influence the development of meaning. If all shadows were suddenly removed, the world of visual perceptions would not seem to be the same world which we now see. Landscapes are influenced greatly by the distribution of light and shade. Architects and artists are familiar with its influence, and art galleries are so illuminated that the distribution of light and shade may be controlled. There is a stream in a beautiful Carolina mountain gorge which reminds one of some people; for, due to the variation of shadow effects at different hours of the day, the stream seems to flow downhill at one time and uphill at another time.

In many respects, therefore, shadows are similar to personal influence in the way they give symmetry and beauty, or grotesqueness and ugliness.

There are people who exert little influence because they remain in the darkness of undevelopment. Others have no convictions, and their transparent souls bring no comfort or leadership to those about them. Others, having hearts dense with the unholy desire of selfish ambition, bring anxiety as from a storm, or the peculiar effects of a solar eclipse. But, on the other hand, there are great men and women who, with strength of character, stand in the brilliant sunlight of truth, and transform life, as it were, into the magnificence of a mountain landscape at morning time. Think for a moment of the transformation wrought by those in art, literature, music, science, statesmanship, education, and re-

ligion, and of the thousands of unheralded souls who, honest and unselfish, make life worth while.

These early disciples were great spirits upon whom the glittering rays of God's love fell, and the shadows they cast have become so lengthened with the centuries that they touch our lives. They were so attractive and wholesome, as they went about doing good, that many people had such confidence in them as to cause them to bring forth the sick and lay them on beds, "that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them."

*Love to the Uttermost*

I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world,  
but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also  
sent them into the world.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might  
be sanctified through the truth.

—JOHN 17:15-19

A GREAT LOVE COMMANDS RESPECT AND ADDS CHARM AND BEAUTY TO life. How much richer the world is on account of the love of Abraham and Sarah, Jonathan and David, Abélard and Héloïse, Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett, and a host of other men and women who have devoted their lives to a great love.

At the close of his ministry Jesus gave evidence of his intelligent, comprehensive, persistent, and trustful love for his disciples. The record says that, "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

The disciples were his own. He called them his children. He adopted them as a teacher adopts his students and calls them "My boys," whether they remain in the classroom or go to widely



separated parts of the world. Jesus recognized in them intellectual and ethical capacity. He believed in them. He educated them through personal touch and example, private conversation and public lectures, and in the unmatched laboratory of human suffering and need.

Moreover, the disciples were in the world, and Jesus wanted them to stay in the world. The love of God is not an abstraction, nor does it operate in a vacuum. It is concerned with people in a realistic world. Jesus found his disciples in the world, every one of them an alert and busy man. The Lord never selects a loafer. Try to recall one instance, from Abraham to the present time, where God called an indolent man to a great task. These disciples did not come from the seclusion of the Temple, nor from a hermit's cave. They were laborers, fishermen, a tax collector—men associated with industry, government, people. Jesus kept them in the world, and sent them into the world.

Love does not pauperize life by imposing restrictions that stifle initiative. Some parents, through misdirected love, commit the tragedy of never permitting their children to accept responsibility. Even the eagle tears up her nest that her young may learn to fly. Jesus did not want his disciples to become ascetics or hermits. He wanted them to use their powers. They were to go where people were. They were to see suffering and need, ignorance and strife, hate and injustice, intemperance and waste, and devote their lives to the elimination of these evils.

And Jesus loved them to the end. He had boundless patience with them. His disciples misunderstood him. They became impatient. They quarreled among themselves, and were selfish and ignorant enough to want personal precedence in heaven. Peter

became a coward at the taunt of a servant girl. Thomas doubted. Judas betrayed him. During the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, the bitterest hour of his life, the disciples with him went to sleep. But despite all such weaknesses and errors, he loved them to the uttermost.

Jesus is the embodiment or incarnation of perfect love.

## *Unseen Things*

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God.

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

—II CORINTHIANS 4:15-18

PLATO SAYS SOMEWHERE THAT A HALF-TRUTH IS THE WORST FORM OF falsehood. The statement is correct, for a misrepresentation coated with truth is attractive, plausible, and therefore to most people readily acceptable and dangerous. One of the most prevalent modes of deception is that practiced by those who insist that only the seen, the tangible, and "cash value" are the real. Under such a claim, supported by an overworked logic, have appeared forms of sophistry, certain tendencies in psychology and philosophy, types of obnoxious literary realism, and the doctrine of force or might in business, government, and the professions.

Paul, however, says that the things which are not seen are the eternal. What does he mean?

First, the unseen things are the real things. He says that the things which are seen are not the real entities. He suggests that truth cannot be reduced to observable phenomena. Objects are too variable; sensory experience is too restricted, the mind too limited; and manifestations must not be mistaken for the ultimate. For example, one may describe an oak in minute detail, but the principle which directs its growth and the substance which forms the tangible object have not been seen. One sees by light, but no one has seen light. One easily locates electrical transmission lines, but electrical energy as such has not been observed.

Moreover, the unseen things are the controlling things. For example, scientists speak of chemical affinity, dynamics, and gravitation. The atom has been pictured as a miniature universe, and the heavens have been charted. The microcosm and the macrocosm seem to move with uncanny precision. But all are controlled by some great unseen hand, call it what you will. Speaking of appearances, Eddington impressively states that "matter and all else that is in the physical world have been reduced to a shadowy symbolism."

Furthermore, the unseen is the abiding. Rivers flow, mountains are leveled to piedmont areas and plains; but gravitation remains. Generations of plants and animals come and go; but life persists. A thousand conceptions of right and justice appear; but principles of right and justice abide.

Finally, the unseen things are the spiritually satisfying things. A lower animal may live by bread alone; a man cannot do so.

With eternity planted in his heart, man is not satisfied with appearances. Food satisfies the body, color satisfies the eye, sound satisfies the ear, information satisfies the intelligence; but the divine hunger of the soul can be allayed only by faith in the existence of truth as the foundation of things temporal.

## *Values of Worship*

And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

—Acts 9:3-6

WORSHIP DOES NOT CONSIST IN THE OBSERVANCE OF RITUAL OR BELIEF in articles of faith. As commendable and helpful as great opinions and modes of expression may be, if one goes only to dogmas, creeds, traditions, theology, or other creations of the mind to discover truth, he will find them as empty as the tomb. Worship is essentially an experience with God, which is likely to produce invaluable effects. When Saul of Tarsus became aware of the Eternal, the worshipful experience transformed him from priest to apostle. His life is therefore an illustration of the values of worship.

Worship reveals a great and definite objective. Saul was so fascinated by him whom he heard actually for the first time, that prisons, physical torture, and death no longer held terror for him. We now move on a stormy sea raging with icy gales, crosscurrents, and devastating breakers; and our minds tend to break under the strain of such mental discord. Even a casual student of abnormal psychology may observe numerous types of wreckage of mind and personality. Worship helps unify and orient life by enabling one to experience genuine manifestations of truth. As Plato states, "The intelligence . . . rejoices at beholding reality, and . . . is replenished and made glad."

Moreover, worship enables one to gain a correct conception of values. The controversy over values is now as widespread as it is disconcerting. Custom seems to offer one type of values; religion presents another type; while science disclaims any interest in values. One is consequently sometimes made to feel that the absolute is after all merely opinion which itself is as diverse and unstable as time and place permit. One is reminded of Eddington's reference to the weakness of opinion, in which he says that natural law, instead of being ultimate, cannot even tackle the multiplication table singlehanded. But when Saul experienced the Divine Presence there was no longer any question about opinion. He was changed from a religious dogmatist to an apostle of Truth. Likewise, when anyone actually worships he lays aside the shackles of medieval or modern traditionalism and dogma, and he no longer bows himself in worship before any man, opinion, or form of temporal power.

Finally, worship gives a clear conception of responsibility. No intelligent person wishes the end product of his life to be a failure.

The greatest evil in the world is the waste of opportunity and personality. Such tragedy need not occur. Isaiah heard the voice of Almighty God, said "Send me," and became a great prophet. Moses experienced Jehovah at the burning bush, and then became a great leader. Saul met Christ, and consequently became a flaming evangel who never again doubted his mission. Likewise, Carey, Yates, Grenfell, Schweitzer, and Kagawa were made great by worship.

If and when we as individuals, or as a nation, know the truth, we shall be free.



## *The Master Teacher*

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

—JOHN 3:1-2

JESUS OF NAZARETH IS THE MASTER TEACHER OF ALL AGES. HE TAUGHT the truth to men in such a way that the truth made them free. Through his infinite wisdom, his all-inclusive love for people, his lucid teaching, and his truth-imparting personality, Jesus healed men of the sleeping sickness of sin, the coma of ignorance, and the delirium of selfishness. He opened the eyes of their inner understandings and showed them the meaning of the life of God in the life of man.

Jesus possessed infinite wisdom. He knew what God is like, and he bore witness of his Father. He knew what was in man, and revealed to men the sacredness and worth of their own lives in the sight of God. Jesus portrayed God as a creative Father, working in the world in the processes of healing, reconciliation, and judgment. Jesus also, as a Son of God, knew that labor is a

divine exercise; he was able to use his own hands, and understanding; and he led men into the godly pursuit of honest labor in a great cause. Jesus was thoroughly acquainted with the word and the spirit of the Scriptures of his day. He understood the social, political, and religious currents and eddies of thought that often threatened to engulf him. The beauteous array of nature, the sordid glumness of the lowest strata of human life, and the quiet beauty of the pure in heart all were common sights to the eye of Jesus. Jesus had eyes and could see.

Jesus, moreover, excelled all other teachers in wisdom because he loved people for their own sakes. It is no wonder that the Greeks sought him. Here was a man different from their philosophers, because he, out of his love for God, possessed an all-inclusive love for men, regardless of race, creed, possession or position. He lifted up, in himself, the love of God for men, and men were drawn unto him. Good homes welcomed him, hardened sinners bowed at his feet with adoring petitions for mercy, and confused scholars sought new light from him as to the meaning of life. The compassion of Jesus for people was an inner light. That inner light enabled him to see remorse and worth where others saw only the weakness, the sin, the failure, and the debris of human lives. Consequently, Zacchaeus was transformed, Lazarus had a friend in time of great need, the Samaritan woman's hunger and thirst for righteousness was appeased, and Nicodemus called Jesus a teacher sent from God.

Jesus, furthermore, taught as one having authority because he had such a profound grasp of the truth that he could state it simply and clearly. The child or the sinner could understand his meaning. He was a master teacher because he could put the

deepest thoughts of the human mind and the most subtle movements of the human soul into simple words that anyone could understand. He could express the truth in the language of the person who needed it. He was not afraid to meet any person on his own level with the gospel. He spoke to Martha and Mary about housekeeping, to Peter about fishing, to the socially elite about a banquet, to Thomas about scars, and to Nicodemus about intellectual and spiritual births.

But Jesus was the master teacher because he expressed the perfect truth through his own perfect personality. Jesus was never guilty of warping the minds of his students with error. He could therefore say to his Father in prayer: "I pray for . . . . them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." The Greeks had taught the idea of God; the Scribes and Pharisees had taught the so-called laws of God. Jesus revealed God in himself. He did not say, "I teach the truth"; he said, "I am the truth," and "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

The world sat in a great darkness; in Jesus, however, it beheld a great awakening light, a teacher full of graciousness and truth. Our primary need is that we shall see the Master Teacher as he is.

*Mental Perversion*

And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread.

And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

—MARK 8:15-18

THERE ARE FIVE HUMAN SKULLS IN MY OFFICE WHICH, IT MAY BE said, represent that number of different types of people. One skull is that of a hydrocephalic. A disease, causing excessive secretion of cerebrospinal fluid, attacked this person and affected his brain and mind in a way which doomed him to bodily abnormality and hopeless idiocy. Another skull is that of a microcephalic. This skull became prematurely ossified, and thus not only failed to develop to normal size, but also prevented full cerebral growth. As a consequence, this man's mind did not exceed that of an imbecile. The third skull is that of a woman who belonged to an African tribe. She was the victim of the laws of

fashion of her people, for during infancy her head was so bound that it became an elongated, melon-shaped structure. Still another skull is trilobed. This man, in early childhood, was selected to become a priest, and the religious beliefs of his sect demanded that his head should grow into the peculiar trilobite shape. Alongside these abnormal skulls rests one of normal size and shape.

It is in this manner that human minds become weakened, restricted, warped, perverted and fixed, or developed to rich maturity. There are thousands of people who, through the inroads of disease, become mentally enfeebled. They are, perhaps as often as not, the innocent victims of an inexorable heredity or a vicious acquired malady. There are countless thousands of other people whose minds become prematurely fixed in mediocrity. The social stratum into which they are born and in which they are reared so binds them in various ways that they become fixed on the level of immature thought. Their ideas and their interests scarcely exceed those of a child. As Albert Pike says, they rarely rise above the ox or the machine beside which they labor. Tragically and unwittingly, their capacity for normal development becomes lost.

Moreover, one finds everywhere people whose minds are perverted by superficial claims and artificial objectives. They may be surrounded by financial and social abundance, yet they become the slaves of restricting customs, traditions, fashions, and ideologies. Their ideals and ambitions conform to those of their stratum. They continue therefore to think as their particular mental environment has decreed. Their minds become as impervious to new ideas as a steel jacket is impenetrable by a lead projectile. They often reveal an infinite capacity to resist the reception of

new modes of truth. This condition obtains in sectarian as well as secular affairs. Those shaped by the molds of religious beliefs and practices may be the most irreceptive type, for their thought is directed by established emotionalism as well as modes of reasoning. Christ warns against both sectarian and secular dangers. "Beware," he says, "of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod."

No one ever placed more emphasis upon intellectual growth than did Christ. He devoted his life in large measure to the removal of enslaving conditions. He never refused a plea to help the afflicted, never avoided an opportunity to bring freedom to enshackled minds, never omitted a plea for normal human growth in body, mind, and soul. At the very center of the Christian commission is to be found the right and the obligation of every human being to grow "in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." He that hath eyes to see, let him see. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

*The Salvation of Zacchaeus*

And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

And he sought to see Jesus, who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.

And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.

And he made haste, and came down; and received him joyfully.

And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

—LUKE 19:1-8

LIFE IS INESCAPABLY REALISTIC. SOCIETY CONSISTS OF PEOPLE OF diverse training, interests, and ideals. Countless beliefs, customs, and organizations make accepted claims upon loyalties and prac-

tices. One breaks established habits and escapes from common social currents only with difficulty and suffering. Zacchaeus, a man of ability, wealth, and position, was a victim of the social mores of his country and found himself surrounded by an irrational crowd of his people. But, activated by a moment's higher insight, he ignored public opinion, took a radical step, and discovered spiritual freedom. What caused his transformation?

One of the causes of Zacchaeus' transformation was the exerting of personal effort. He was surrounded by a multitude of people who obscured his view physically, mentally, and spiritually. This seething crowd pulsed with physical force, morbid curiosity, bitter prejudice, blinding selfishness, and arrogant officiousness. This little man, therefore, was to the crowd only a despised tax collector, a sinner of no particular worth, and perhaps outside the pale of social responsibility and spiritual help. But Zacchaeus, intellectually curious and spiritually famished, hungered and thirsted for a view of the Master; he consequently did what he could, with the resources he had, to look upon the Christ. Impulsive and enlightened initiative impelled him to surmount obstacles which obstructed his view. He climbed a sycamore tree.

Then, Jesus saw him. Jesus disregarded the crowd and fastened his eye on the individual. He looked upon Zacchaeus, recognized his naïve but sincere desire, and requested him to come down. The Master never ignored a needy suppliant, nor was he ever unprepared to help one. John correctly stated the attitude of Jesus thus: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." It was in this way that Jesus met the Roman centurion, the timid afflicted woman who touched



the hem of his garment, the Gadarene lunatic, the pleading lepers, the man with the withered hand, the cripple by the pool, the sinful woman at the well, the disciple who had denied knowing him, and the little children who trusted him. It was natural, then, that he should see Zacchaeus and bring a blessing to him. He had eyes that upon seeing could see.

Jesus transformed Zacchaeus when he had been in fellowship with him but a short while. He did something through kindness which the others present could not do with their superficial curiosity, their exaggerated self-righteousness, and their illusory self-security. They condemned Zacchaeus as a sinner; they reflected their own pallid characters by murmuring against Jesus for befriending Zacchaeus. But Jesus loved him, and gave him a new grip on himself and a new outlook on life. No acid criticism could affect Jesus, and no shackle of custom could restrain him in the presence of expressed, sincere desire for relief, whether it was in a home, on a highway, in the temple, or among the tombs. Through the radiant dynamic of such a gracious personality Zacchaeus became a different man. He was no longer selfish and grasping: "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor." Repentant, he did not evade restitution: "If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." Jesus created within Zacchaeus that well of sympathy and humility that springs up into eternal life, and so graciousness and productivity now prevailed in the life of Zacchaeus.

*Birthdays*

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

—JOHN 3:1-5

CHRIST FREQUENTLY USED PARABLES, SIMILES, AND METAPHORS IN teaching great truths. He never made a mystery of God, life, and religion. He often used astonishingly simple language and graphic illustrations in discussions of profound truths. Christ thus spoke to Nicodemus, a scholar, a teacher, and a member of a distinguished circle in Jerusalem, in the language that any man

could be expected to understand. Nicodemus wished to know how a man can enter the Kingdom of God, and Christ specified two conditions.

The Master told Nicodemus that one must be born of water. Man must use the tangible means of maintaining, cleansing, and improving his life. Water is essential to life. The cells and gross structures of a living organism are constantly bathed and fed with water, and without water the organism will eventually perish. Man's body, mind, and soul must be thus maintained through the substances essential to them. Moreover, water is a symbol of cleanliness. With it the body is cleansed, externally and internally, of waste and impurities, just as the atmosphere, the countryside, and cities are freed of dust, waste, and pollution. Through its beneficent use, health, strength, and beauty are revived and promoted. Nicodemus was expected, then, to understand that baptism with water is emblematical of purifying one's life, for, as it is conducive to health and beauty of the body, so it should, symbolically, cleanse mind and soul of noxious evils and promote growth and charm.

Thus, Christ explained that one may be reborn, as it were, by the use of beneficent agencies available to him. Birth is a change of environment which offers greater opportunities. Some of us had birthdays when we read the winged words of Homer, the idealistic philosophy of Plato, the revealing gospel of John. Some of us entered into a new world when we heard the symphonies of Mendelssohn and Beethoven, and discovered the poetry of the psalmist. Some of us were reborn when we first held our first child in our arms. Some of us had another birthday when we removed shackles from a student's imprisoned mind, fed a desti-

tute beggar, or enabled a crippled child to walk. Through the use of such available means, Christ said, we find one means of entering the Kingdom.

But Christ specified a condition of birth which transcended accomplishments of body and mind. He declared that there must be a spiritual birth which includes a clear conception of eternal verities and a deep loyalty to truth. This transformation of insights, ideals, motivations, and objectives of life occurs through experience with God. Christ knew that Nicodemus was familiar with literature, music, philosophy, and theology; but this in itself was not sufficient. He informed Nicodemus that the spiritual birth occurs when God's Spirit enters the spirit of man. This teacher needed that keystone of wisdom—that transforming personal knowledge of the intrinsic worth of man, the near and loving care of God, and the obligation to lose one's life in devotion to God and man. Such growth effects a spiritual birth into the Kingdom of God. Christ was thus born, and he knew.

*The Small Becomes Large*

The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.

—ISAIAH 60:19-22

A DISTINGUISHED INDUSTRIALIST MADE THIS STATEMENT TO AN OBSCURE teacher in a Christian college: "The cloth we make wears out, and the marble we finish will eventually disintegrate; the ideal you plant in a human mind lives eternally." But the average person seldom reflects upon the law of increasing returns in the realm of mind and spirit. Isaiah here proclaims the growing influence of an unheralded idea, and of an apparently incidental deed when it is in harmony with the law of the eternal God.

The mother of the infant Moses was faithful to the trust committed to her, not suspecting that she was training one who would become a peerless statesman and religious leader. The acacia bush at Horeb was only a species of tree, but its flaming beauty awakened Moses to an awareness of the presence of God and the holiness of his creation. The shepherd boy came to Saul's army to bring food to his brothers; but he used, not heavy armor, but a sling and pebble to bring victory and relief to Israel. Gideon's men drank water in an alert manner and showed themselves worthy of battle against apparently overwhelming forces. A poor widow cast two trivial coins into the treasury, unaware that Christ saw her and that her act would bring forth the Master's praise and set the high standard of Christian benevolence. Christ told the blind man to go wash in the pool of Siloam, and obedience to that simple request brought relief to the afflicted man. The Samaritan, through unassumed compassion, helped a wounded man, never suspecting that he would be immortalized as a good neighbor and an example of how one may find eternal life. Paul had a dream, an incidental occurrence which led him to carry the gospel into classical Greece and thus to European civilization.

All about us may be found examples of the abundant fruitfulness of a casual word and an unostentatious deed. An incidental remark by a college professor inspired a high-school student to graduate from college and a great law school, and then enter upon a distinguished career as a jurist. A boy who saw his unlettered mother sign her name with a mark became the great "educational governor" of his state. A minister reports that only one little boy was converted during a series of meetings, but that boy became an internationally known preacher. A group of students

sought shelter in a haystack, and there they started the foreign missionary movement in America. A colored boy, an ex-slave, swept a classroom well that he might be admitted to the school; that youth founded one of the greatest schools for Negroes in the world, and became a foremost citizen of the United States. On a campus in the South is a log cabin in which a noble young woman began a school now grown into a beautiful institution worth many millions of dollars, having a large faculty, and bringing enlightenment to thousands of eager youth.

In God's sight and under his law there is no insignificant life and no unimportant deed. In God's great order and in his good time the small may become vastly great. Not infrequently the doors of destiny swing open on exceedingly small hinges.

## *The Wages of Sin*

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me.

—PSALM 51:1-3

JESUS RECOGNIZED THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL IN THE WORLD. HE REGARDED the sinner as one who misses the high mark of the glory of God and consequently becomes to some extent a warped and enslaved personality and contaminating influence.

Sin degrades the sinner. As Plato says, evil gradually seeps into a life and grows until it may finally become a furious monster which turns upon its keeper and torments him. As Homer forcefully describes and as Milton and Spenser show, sin effects a Circean transformation of man from the human form to that of a swinish brute. Sin breeds disease and fosters habits which enfeeble and often destroy the body. It nurtures anxieties and fears which retard, weaken, shackle, and break the mind. It obscures ideals, lashes conscience, and drives away peace and happiness. For the sinner the wages of sin is retardation of development, blighting of hopes, and destruction of serenity.



Moreover, the effects of sin persist. An apparently trivial sin, like a minor infection in one's body, often grows until it infests one's life. The bacilli of evil, like an obnoxious leaven, may multiply until they pollute a man's thought and conduct. Once an evil occurs, it launches a stream of forces beyond the sinner's control. Repentance may bring forgiveness, but it does not forestall the effects of sin. David repented in sackcloth and ashes; yet Uriah was dead, the sword of God's moral law was upon the king's household, and David never ceased to feel the barbs of evil in his own mind, never escaped the burdens of tragedy in his family, and never became free from the insubordination of his officers. With unspeakable remorse, Judas brought the silver back to the priests, but he did not save himself or him whom he had betrayed. Christ forgave the thief on the cross beside him, but the thief was not free from the effects of his lawlessness.

Furthermore, the fruits of sin multiply indefinitely. A man's sin is not restricted to himself, nor do its effects die with him. The influence of a wasted, a dishonest, an intemperate, or an immoral life moves on, frequently with increasing momentum in a widening circle, through many years and generations. David's children and the nation of which he was king tasted for long centuries the bitter fruits of the evil seed which he planted. One day a Revolutionary War soldier named Kallikak sinned. From his sordid act have come almost five hundred human descendants, the majority of whom are listed as criminal, immoral, pauper, feeble-minded, insane; and the end of this lurid trail is yet nowhere near.

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. . . . Walk not thou in the way with them."

*No Easy Road*

And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house.

And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

—LUKE 9:57-62

NOTHING GREAT IS EASY. THOSE WHO MINIMIZE THE SEVERITY OF THE Christian way are unaware of Christ's exacting standards in a hostile world. However glorious and commanding it may be, the lofty idealism of the Master is attained only through meeting grave difficulties. The Scripture here reveals two of Christ's answers to thoughtless and impulsive people.

Christ told the men that he himself was enduring difficulties, and he showed them the hardships they would encounter in the great adventure with him. Christ knew what privation meant, for he gave up his home, his family discounted his mission, his neighbors attempted to kill him, religious leaders and public servants hated him, and the Gadarenes preferred swine to him. The multitude followed him selfishly, his disciples deserted him in danger, an unjust judge refused him protection, soldiers cast dice for his robe, and he died between two criminals.

Devout Christians have paid in the coin of suffering for their fellowship with Christ. Tradition holds that Peter was crucified. John the Baptist was imprisoned and beheaded. Stephen was stoned to death, and Paul suffered the lash and the headsman's ax. Other Christians were driven to the catacombs, thrown into the arena, lighted as human torches. Bunyan, Tyndale, Latimer, Knox, and a host of others, in their fellowship with Christ, found suffering in their conquest of an ignorant, wicked, and cruel world.

Modes of torture may have changed, but anyone who dares to be definitely Christian today will suffer some form of crucifixion. If he escapes a concentration camp, he will be maligned, scoffed at, or ostracized. Moreover, who dares say that it is easy to know what is right, to do what is right, to return good for evil, to bless them who practice selfishness and abuse? What beds of ease can a Christian now find in a subterranean shelter? What pleasure can he have from the alkaline taste of the ashes falling in the world conflagration? From the point of view of physical torture and mental agony, the road a true Christian must travel is indeed the *via dolorosa*.

Christ also made it plain that his way requires exacting and uncompromising loyalty. He frowned upon dual loyalties, lax efforts, and wasteful procrastination. He pointed out that a man having divided motives is not fit for leadership in the Kingdom of God. His criterion of admission was all or none. He knew the ill effects of divergent interests, and he understood the handicaps of personal anxieties, cares, and fears about trivial affairs. He therefore told his disciples not to become unduly concerned about money, clothing, food, what they should say during a crisis, or bodily suffering. Paul knew what Christ meant by conflicting claims when he wrote: "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Psychiatrists today understand what Christ meant when they see men and women who try to serve two masters—God and mammon, enlightenment and ignorance, purity and impurity—become broken in mind. The human temple cannot withstand such irreconcilable inner urges. So, with trenchant hyperbole, the Master stated the imperative need of singleness of purpose when he said, "Let the dead bury their dead," and "Who is my mother?" And his own unwavering steadfastness and complete serenity show forth his singleness of purpose.

## *A Youth Movement*

Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

—MARK 1:16-17

YOUTH, ARISING IN EACH NEW GENERATION, IS THE WORLD'S FOUNTAIN-source of human advancement. Jesus inaugurated the most fruitful youth movement that man has witnessed; for he founded a worthy, constructive, growing, and permanent enterprise. How did he do this?

He selected twelve young men between the approximate ages of eighteen and thirty. They had time, resiliency, stamina, and capacity. They were not bound by the routine responsibilities of homes and organizations. They were not restricted by the fixed prejudices and provincial loyalties so common to old age. None was hindered by priestly or political ties or aspirations. Their capacity for God had not been crystallized. They were teachable; they were able to see the issues of life; they were able to hear the still, sad music of humanity; they were able to feel indignation and kindness; and they were able to recognize truth and submit

themselves to its obligations. They were able, therefore, to grow in wisdom concerning God and man.

Jesus required three things of these young men. First, they must grow intellectually. He knew that ignorance, the foul sire of blunder and a legion of Hydra-headed monsters, restrains the growth of the Kingdom of God. Hence, from the outset he lectured to them, showed them actual conditions of life, revealed to them relative values, warned them about personal obstacles and suffering, and set before them the perfect example of thought and conduct. At times he became impatient at their dullness and said: "Do ye not remember?" "How is it that ye do not understand?" "How long shall I suffer you?" "Are ye also yet without understanding?" Yet, to the end he taught them of the reality of God; he showed them how sacred their own lives were; and he assured them of his own eternal presence in the work they had to do.

Again, Jesus required that they be boldly adventurous. Numerous times he said: "Be not afraid." "Why are ye so fearful?" He urged that they should not be afraid in the presence of storms, illness, death, and great personal danger. He regarded cowardice as evil, and once, when Peter advised him to evade danger, he told him that he talked as of the devil. He thus branded intellectual and moral cowardice, whether of an individual or an organization, as unchristian and contemptible. He charged his followers to lay aside all impediments and to run with steadfastness the course that he himself had blazed for them.

Moreover, Jesus requested faith. He required the complete confidence of his followers in this new enterprise. He offered them no well-organized institution, no economic guarantee, no personal comforts, no freedom from critics and enemies, and no official re-

wards. He asked them to leave their homes, parents, friends, and work, and join him in launching a movement that would have its consummation in Eternity. He pointed them to the simple deeds of life; he reminded them of grass, lilies, foxes, children, distracted people, and God. But he promised them that by faith they could move mountains. It was thus by faith that they were to follow him, touch the infinite resources of God's reservoir of truth, and become invincible. The forces of evil could not hold out against such an adventurous faith.

Jesus also demanded that these young men make practical applications of spiritual laws. Jesus said of himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." This program carried him to the very center of the needs of men and women, and it required that his disciples follow him in relieving distress, regardless of time, place, and circumstances. Jesus called out the best in these young adventurers when he told them they were chosen not to be theological pulpiteers, abstract theorizers, and obscure speculators. They were to be full-grown ministers of truth for confused minds, balm for broken bodies, and hope for disheartened men. Jesus always kept his hand on the pulse of human need. He knew that such a ministry leads one into the presence of the Eternal.

*If Thou Knewest*

There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

(For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

—JOHN 4:7-10

AN ANCIENT PAGAN SAGE SAID THAT KNOWLEDGE IS VIRTUE. INDEED, the majority of those who do evil are the victims of some form of ignorance, for few men deliberately do a wrong. If, therefore, the veil of obscurity were removed from his intellect, man would choose the right rather than the wrong modes of life. Jesus said that truth would make man free. The woman at the well represents one who has not been transformed by truth, and who has therefore not been awakened to the truth about self, about God, and about the actual conditions of human life.



This Samaritan woman did not appreciate the fact that Jacob's well was hallowed by a thousand years of Hebrew history. A great cloud of witnesses—men of vision who had labored and fought for home and freedom and who had borne the humiliation of defeat—encompassed her. Had she known, the great treasures of social rights and religious freedom, gained through the faith, courage, toil, and suffering of her forefathers, would have inspired her. Moreover, she did not realize that the well was a memorial to civic effort and progress. If she had realized that Jacob and others had undertaken to meet the needs of men and women, herds and flocks, she would have felt the need to contribute to the social improvement of her community. She would have observed the hungry, the sick, the mentally frustrated, and endeavored to remove such barriers to social righteousness.

In her blindness, the woman was racially prejudiced. If, however, she had known the essential nature and worth of an individual human life, she, like the good Samaritan, would have made no primary distinction between Jew and Samaritan. For, to those who know a man as an immortal soul, instead of appraising him in terms of color, social status, and reputation only, racial barriers vanish as fog fades before the sun.

The woman was furthermore blinded by religious provincialism. For her, God was a local, a tribal god, to be worshiped only at a specified place. If she had only known the essence of the religion of Jesus she would have understood that God is a Spirit and that those who worship him must do so in spirit and in truth, rather than in terms of place, formality, or organization. Had she thus known, her God would have been a God, not of Jew or

Gentile, Greek or barbarian, but of all people, irrespective of race, nationality, or creed.

Moreover, she did not know the man with whom she talked. But, as she conversed with Christ, the light began to appear, and she began to see Jesus as the Messiah. Then she hurried away to tell others, according to her ability, of her discovery and to bring them to know the Master.

## *Quantity and Quality*

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet.

—PSALM 8:3-6

WE SOMETIMES SEE A STUDENT WHO, HAVING BEEN ADMITTED TO A fraternity or elected to an office, appears to feel confident that value and wisdom will perish with him. He interprets the whole universe in terms of himself. He proclaims that he is not a puny part, but the axis of creation. But, if he has a growing mind, the psalmist's searching question, "What is man?" inevitably arises.

As a child, one is anthropocentric. He thinks of man as the center of a small universe. He regards the earth as the primary sphere around which all other heavenly bodies pass. The sun, for illustration, was created to provide man with light and warmth by day, while the moon and stars were made to give man light

and beauty by night. Moreover, all plants and animals exist, directly or indirectly, for the support and comfort of man. But when the dawn of a greater knowledge comes, its brilliant light compels the growing student to readjust his mental vision. He discovers that the earth is only one small planet of one solar system amid millions times millions of stellar systems. Astronomers tell him that, if grains of sand represent the stars, the number of grains of sand, as large as the number of the stars, "spread over England would make a layer several hundred yards in depth." Astronomers also reveal to him something of the immensity of space. Whereas light travels around the earth in one seventh of a second, it travels fifty years in passing from the North Star to the earth; and it would travel six billion years before it encompassed the universe.

The thoughtful student, moreover, becomes informed about the immensity of time. He finds that scientists reckon time in terms of billions times billions of years. They discuss young, old, and dead stars. They report that the sun is more than seven million million years old, whereas the earth is only a child of about two thousand million years. Furthermore, life has existed on this planet only some sixty million years. Man appeared comparatively recently—perhaps a mere hundred and fifty thousand years ago. The student thus learns that he is barely an atom and a split second in incredibly enormous space and time. He is told that all things—atoms, stars, men—decay and pass into timeless, eternal night. If a man thinks of himself merely in terms of the space, time, and matter which he as an individual in some measure controls with his own puny powers, he will feel himself

dwindling into utter insignificance and crying out, with Voltaire, that men are

Tormented atoms in a bed of mud,  
Devoured by death, a mockery of fate. . . .  
This world, this theater of pride and wrong,  
Swarms with sick fools who talk of happiness.

But the psalmist writes in no such mood of despair. The shepherd-poet refers to the awe-inspiring immensity of the universe only in order to emphasize the fact that God does not value man in terms of how much he has, how much he does, or how long he lives. As man does not value the mountain above the vein of gold, the shell above the pearl, the silt above the diamond, so God does not value the temporal things of life above the eternal ideas of life.

The psalmist proclaims the fact of the Eternal God whose glory transcends the grandeur of the heavens. Scientists who reveal the nature of the universe, like the poet, bow humbly before the Eternal. Darwin, for example, asserts that "this grand sequence of events the mind refuses to accept as the result of blind chance. The understanding revolts from such a conclusion." Kepler, as he ponders astronomical formulas, reverently exclaims, "Almighty God, these are thy thoughts I am thinking after thee."

The poet also says that God is a personal God who is mindful of the individual man and visits him. He proclaims, furthermore, that God created man a little lower than the angels, and placed upon him a divine crown of glory and honor. He gave man a nobility of soul and a sufficient degree of intelligence to be, not the owner, but the wise custodian of the creative providences of

God's hands. He reveals thus that God does not measure man's worth in terms of the shifting quantities of man's hungers for food, possessions, power, and recognition, but in terms of the eternal qualities of man's passion for truth, beauty, and righteousness, and his willingness to submit himself humbly to his Sovereign. The individual human being is, in these respects, greater than any physical thing, whether atom or universe. The star, the mountain, and the violin may outlast man's body, but man discovers the star, appreciates the beauty of the mountain, and constructs the instrument from which he brings inimitably beautiful strains of music of his own creation.

*Christian Witnessing*

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

—ROMANS 12:1-2

THE APOSTLE PAUL HAD BEEN BEFORE THE BAR OF ROMAN LAW AND had heard accusations and pleas. He here insists that Christians should be worthy and convincing witnesses for Christ. He knew the frailty, confusion, and error of religious leaders who were superficial. He regarded them as unsatisfactory defenders of the high standard of perfection raised by Christ. In view of their vast obligations and superb privileges, Paul pleaded for effective witnessing.

Paul says that a Christian should offer infallible proof. His evidence should be true, incontrovertible, convincing, and thus should be able to withstand the caustic cross-examination of uninformed, skeptical, prejudiced, or scholarly jurists. Paul knew that proof of the fatherhood of God, the divinity of Christ, and the intrinsic worth of man does not consist of mere opinions, dog-

matic claims, vague sentiments, soothing platitudes, established rituals, unexamined creeds, official duties, or membership in organizations. He was convinced that, in this incomparable court, valid evidence about these vital considerations must be stated in the exacting and irrefutable terms of a life so illuminated and consecrated as to be a living sacrifice, one holy and acceptable unto God. In his estimation, one such living example is worth more than a host of inferior witnesses. He therefore agrees with Heraclitus who said: "One to me is as good as ten thousand if he be but the best."

Moreover, Paul insists that a Christian should be an unfaltering witness in behalf of possessions indispensable to human welfare and salvation. He therefore emphasizes the lofty responsibility with which Christ charged his disciples. The Apostle is not speaking of one's property, reputation, social status, academic honors, fraternal affiliations, nationality or race, however fine and helpful such matters are with respect to integrity, right living, and promotion of the Kingdom of the Lord. He proposes that the unique privilege and responsibility of a Christian is that of proving to erring men and women the good, the reasonable, and the perfect will of the Eternal God. He knew that the members of the human family, wittingly or not, are constantly before the bar of a just God who is not deceived or mocked.

Furthermore, Paul reveals how a Christian can witness. A man's life must become transformed so as to conform not to the codes of human opinion and practice, but to the will of God himself. Man is not for Paul the measure of all things. The writer of this Epistle to the Romans remembers his own growth and readjustment. His own transformation had required time,



effort, and suffering, but it had changed him from a bigot to a Christian evangelist. He therefore shows the urgent necessity of a discipline of body, a reorientation of interests, an enlargement of vision, a development of character, and a new dedication of loyalties. Such a transformation occurs, says Paul, only when a man is illuminated by Christ, "the true Light, which lighteth every man," morally purged by Christ, the "refiner's fire," and spiritually fed upon the food of truth by Christ, the Living Bread. Paul knew that a Christian's work, irrespective of the sphere in which it occurs, must be constructive and pre-eminently worth while. He therefore insisted upon deep consecration, superior motives, and productive labor.

## *Preparation for Christian Service*

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

—Acts 13:1-3

IN THESE DAYS OF PERPLEXITY, CONFUSION, AND PERIL, NO OTHER WORK is more important and more difficult than that of a Christian minister. The minister is a representative of God to a world filled with dangerous ideologies, racial hatreds, unbridled selfishness, and widespread human carnage. In this chapter of the Acts are lessons vital and pertinent, for these Christians confronted problems similar to those of the present hour.

They felt the necessity of ministering. They had a genuine desire to make a positive contribution to the relief of human ills. They were aware of existing sickness, poverty, confusion, and deception. They recognized social inequalities, political turmoil,

and religious discrimination. They did not seek wealth, reputation, or official power; they did not know what of success or failure, applause or condemnation, comfort or misery awaited them; they only knew that they were resolved to do what they could to persuade men to become righteous men. To this glorious task they committed themselves.

These Christians also made preparation. They came together to discuss critical problems and crucial situations. They defined well the issues confronting them. They did not feast; they fasted. They did not loaf; they ministered. They did not assume that God rewards ignorance, indifference, indolence, and irreverence. They suffered no illusions about the training of such men as Abraham, Moses, Daniel, Isaiah, and the authors of Job and Ecclesiastes. They knew that God uses a man according as he is prepared to be used.

Then, too, these disciples prayed. They sought to undergird their own resources with the power available from God. Having themselves done what they could, they had the right to expect prayer to be answered. Jesus had promised that where two or three were at one in purpose in his name, there he would be also, and that the Father would not ignore those working in his Kingdom. So, having resolved to serve, having made preparation and having prayed, they were "sent forth by the Holy Ghost, [and] preached the word of God."

### *Wearers of Spiritual Purple*

And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

—Acts 16:14-15

IN THE ANCIENT WORLD ROYAL PURPLE WAS THE MOST COVETED DYE used to color garments. Purple robes were symbols of wealth, power, and royalty. Let us contrast some of those who wore this color, whose interests were temporal and whose authority sent slaves to the galleys and left beggars unfed at their gates, with some of those whose nobility of spirit entitled them to wear the purple of divine royalty.

These men and women, a host of them unknown and unsung, realized worthy and permanent nobility. The purple threads of their character stood out in the silent sheen of a reflective purity. Their royal robes of righteousness, their costly attire of moral heroism are even until now emblems of the beauty of the holiness of God. Thus did Lydia excel those who were in political au-

thority and financial power in Philippi. She neither followed the crowd, moved in the direction of least resistance, nor restricted her vision to that which can be seen or handled. In this way Heraclitus, a member of a distinguished family of Ephesus and an officer in the Temple of Diana, resigned his office, condemned unwholesome religious practices, and refused to live amid the luxury of the palace of an Eastern potentate. Thus he sought to preserve his freedom of thought and the right to worship according to the dictates of his conscience. Abraham attained a robe of never-fading purple when he set out by faith, not knowing where he went, to undertake to establish a God-centered society. Socrates' drab robe was transformed into a regal academic gown by convictions which enabled him to say to those about to condemn him to death: "Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you."

Divine purple, moreover, represents a devout heart. Lydia worshiped God. She was interested in commercial affairs, was devoted to the home she maintained, and enjoyed relatives whom she loved; but it was God only whom she revered and worshiped. She had learned how to place the spiritual above the material, the unseen above the seen, and the eternal above the temporal. As God's child she merited the right to adorn herself with regal garments. It was thus that Daniel, daring to pray, revealed that he was a prince of the eternal realm. In this way Job, who said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," gained immortal peerage. The leaping flames that seared the flesh of dying Polycarp could not destroy the martyr's purple robe of faith which protected his soul as he cried, "Lord Jesus!"

Lydia's spiritual royalty, furthermore, impelled her to assume

the dignity of duty. Honest, consecrated, purposive labor is a divine and holy exercise. It became crystal clear to Lydia that she should minister. The sale of physical material became only a means to an end; her primary interest was that of assisting the apostles in proclaiming the gospel of Christ. Having adorned herself with the queenly robes of the Spirit, she laid up treasures of humble service, more valuable than potentates' gold and land gained by bloody oppression. Thus her regal glory became such as to make Nero, Caligula, Domitian, Lucrezia Borgia, Herodias, and Dives appear clothed in sordid and offensive rags, behaving as crudely as barbarians.

The "Spirit of the Lord" effects a transformation by means of which a life may become genuinely free, permanently valuable, majestically commanding. In this way Augustine turned from luxury to the "City of God." Francis of Assisi quit personal comfort to proclaim the love of God. Wilfred Grenfell ignored a brilliant professional reputation in order to demonstrate the Great Physician in Labrador. Florence Nightingale quit English society to become an angel of mercy in Crimea. Andrew Carnegie surrendered his fortune and became wealthy in spirit. John Harvard left his money to the cause of enlightenment, and his image, more enduring than the bronze statue in the Harvard Yard, is graven on the hearts of men. David Livingstone's arm was mangled by an African lion, yet no other man ever moved with such princely grace in the Dark Continent. When their souls became clothed with the seamless purple garment of faith in the Lord Christ and they became the Children of the Eternal, they each said, "Here am I, send me." And they then marched grandly into immortality.

## *A Christian Unashamed*

I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

—ROMANS 1:14-17

THE APOSTLE PAUL LONGED TO VISIT ROME, FOR HE YEARNED TO PREACH the gospel there. He had a message to deliver in that city, the capital of the world's greatest empire, the seat of legal authority and military prowess, the home of the Caesars, a center of philosophy and of polytheistic religions. His one motive was to preach the gospel; and in bold and challenging words he wrote: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

There were three reasons why Paul, the Roman citizen, the distinguished scholar, the brilliant Hebrew theologian, and the devout Christian, was not ashamed of the gospel of his Lord.

Paul was proud of the author of the gospel. Of all the personalities with whom Paul was familiar, Christ was the greatest. He knew that Christ was the embodiment of the highest wisdom, the greatest courage, and the most unaffected graciousness. He discovered that Christ excelled Moses, Isaiah, Solomon, Jeremiah, Amos, and Gamaliel. He realized that Christ was superior in good judgment and constructive influence to the world-conquering Alexander, the legion-directing Julius Caesar, the law-giving Augustus, the orator Cicero, and the philosopher Seneca. For Christ, although confronted by the opportunity to gain temporal power, had looked beyond the transient attainment to the realization of the Kingdom of God in the hearts of men. Thus his expressed wisdom, his unfaltering devotion to needy human beings, and his peerless good will eclipsed the work and the glory of all others. Paul, therefore, was not ashamed of the gospel of his Master.

Paul also knew that the gospel was the good news of God. He doubtless was familiar with the religious beliefs of Persia, Greece, Rome, and Palestine, and was aware of their values and limitations. He was likely well versed in the philosophy of the sophists, the Epicureans, the idealists, and the Stoics, and knew their worth and deficiencies. But in Jesus he had found the pearl of great price whose value exceeded immeasurably all other tenets and ideologies in religion and philosophy. Here was more than traditional religious authority and more than logic. Here was reality, full of grace and truth, in the simplicity of Jesus Christ. It was the good news about God.

For Christ revealed to Paul that God is not the anthropomorphic, provincial, capricious God of the early Hebrews, the



inexorable natural law of Xenophanes, or the austere universal reason of Zeno the Stoic. He showed that God is an accessible, compassionate, just Father. By clear illustrations, enlightening parables, immortal sermons, tender looks, kind words, a forgiving spirit, and an unfaltering faith, he showed that God is man's friend and not his enemy. The stories about the prodigal son, the lost sheep, the hungry children, and the lilies and the birds were used to reveal the infinite worth of a human life in the sight of God. And his own matchless bearing, even on the cross, exhibited boundless divine love.

Moreover, Paul knew that Christ's gospel transforms men. His good news illuminates the minds of men, transmutes their affections, and remotivates their actions. It is a reasonable message about the realism of life, the charm of the natural world, the relative values in human affairs, the sacredness of personality, the silent beauty of goodness, and the reality of divine justice. Like a lofty spiritual Everest, his ideal, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect," causes men to leave their dark caves of error, their charnel vaults of impurity, and their hovels of ugliness. His Presence urges men on toward the high mark of God's truth, holiness, and beauty.

This gospel attracts and regenerates men, thus giving them salvation from mediocrity and evil. The husky fisherman, the despised tax gatherer, the curious Zacchaeus, the erring woman, the mentally unbalanced man, the tortured thief, and the scholarly Nicodemus were reborn and freed by it. Paul discovered that the world offers nothing else which so mellows, beautifies, and lifts the souls of men above the dross and commonplace.

Furthermore, Paul learned by experience that the gospel pro-

vokes lofty courage and loyalty. He had seen Stephen preach boldly, forgive unstintingly, and die gloriously. He himself willingly exposed intolerant Hebrew orthodoxy, preached the truth, was beaten, bore chains, felt the desertion of comrades, endured shipwreck, visited slums and palaces, worked with his hands, preached to potentates, and suffered death. But he said, "For me to live is Christ." Having found Christ, he could not compromise nor falter, whether before a murderous mob, an intellectual assembly on Mars Hill, an austere Caesar, a Roman jailer, or an executioner.

*Impatience and Patience*

And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

And when his disciples, James and John, saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

—LUKE 9:51-56

JAMES AND JOHN REPRESENT HUMAN IMPATIENCE. SURGES OF INDIGNATION swept through their souls. The people of the Samaritan village had proved themselves to be narrow-minded, ungracious, and inhospitable. The disciples were a group of selected men on a benevolent mission. Their leader, Jesus, was an incomparable teacher, physician, and minister who performed wonderfully mi-

raculous deeds throughout Palestine. They were positive that Jesus would soon set up a perfect political order among the Jews. The inhabitants of the village were only Samaritans. Socially they were half-breeds of a barbarian race; religiously they were unclean outcasts. The Samaritans therefore were so jealous and selfish that they became offended when they discovered that Christ and his disciples were anxious to go to Jerusalem rather than to work in their community and to worship in their temple on Mount Gerizim. Hence they barred their doors to Christ and his group. James and John were infuriated by such outrageous insolence and wished to call down the consuming wrath of heaven upon the Samaritans and utterly destroy them.

It is easy for us to become offended by littleness, crudeness, and bigotry, especially when such offensiveness occurs with those whom we regard as our inferiors socially, racially, and religiously. Not infrequently we impulsively attempt to fight the fire of the littleness, crudeness, and bigotry of other men with the fire of our own littleness, crudeness, and bigotry. We often feel that an objectionable man should be ostracized, that an offensive family should be required to leave the community, that social parasites should be left to starve, that a crude and backward country should be supplanted, that a barbaric totalitarian nation should be exterminated. We would, as it were, bring down fire from heaven upon those who are mean, heathenish, and brutish. We would rejoice if a hail of bombs fell upon totalitarian leaders who, like apocalyptic horsemen, ride roughshod over our culture, peace, and freedom. We are convinced that the world would be much better if such harbingers of misery and injustice were literally effaced from the earth. But such impatience and righteous indig-

nation breeds intolerance and fosters the vindictive primitive jungle code.

We have such attitudes not merely with respect to gross irregularities of other men, but also about our own Christian objectives. We can see evidences of impatience in the religious attitudes of men of all stations of life. Men of today cherish Christian ideals, but are so impatient that they stoop to brazenly non-Christian methods to attain their ideals. Psychological trickery and propaganda have been substituted for the ministry of reconciliation of man with God. Nearsighted apocalyptists beat the air vainly as they cry for God to destroy evil with the terrible blitzkrieg of an immediate second coming. Men of more serious minds, in their impatience that the ravines of poverty, unemployment, and racial inequalities shall be filled, wail that the ethic of Jesus is beautiful but cannot be applied to the present maelstrom of social injustice.

Christ, however, rebuked his beloved disciples for their impatience. He told them that it was evil they contemplated. He showed them that, as his disciples, they had no right to stoop to the level of returning evil for evil. The party thus passed on, leaving the nameless town to oblivion, a terrible price paid for ignorance, unwarranted pride, prejudice born of a feeling of inferiority, and a vindictive spirit.

The patience of God is beyond human comprehension. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." His process of creation is never hurried. He uses billions of years in forming the heavens, and countless millions of years in developing life on the earth. He permits man, through numberless generations of struggle, error, and wreckage, to gain dominion over the earth and over himself, to beat out his own

salvation on the anvil of experience. And, with all the cliffs and ravines in human history, in our saner moments we feel that "the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations"; that "the Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."

We cannot comprehend God with our finite minds. But we can know him in Christ. Infinite patience and compassion were made a fact in Christ. He knew what was in men. He confronted every type of human being and every kind of situation. He met the little children, the fussing housekeepers, the physically sick, the mentally distressed, the dull students, the deserting disciples, the evasive and unjust judge, the selfish rich, the ungrateful lepers, the gambling soldiers, the fickle crowd, the murderous mob. Yet he never hurried, never used his power selfishly, never stooped to retaliatory practices. His was the patience of divine majesty. He showed that victory comes to him who is willing to do his best and then has the power to wait. "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."

*Man<sup>s</sup> and Sin*

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

—GENESIS 1:26-27

THE GREAT GENESIS STORY PORTRAYS THE POWERFUL DRAMA OF THE creation of man and of man's fall into sin. Many of us have permitted questions associated with the method of creation, the nature of the temptation, and the poetic Hebrew spoken by the serpent to trouble us unduly. Consequently we have overlooked some foundational facts which should not escape us.

First, man was created in the image of God. In the beginning God, in his own good time and way, irrespective of our opinion of date or place, breathed into man the breath of life and man became a living soul, a child of eternity. Thus man partook of the divine nature and possessed a measure of freedom. Being God-like, he was not restricted to the cold mechanism of natural law as stones, streams, plants, and brutes appear to be. Possessing a

spiritual nature, man had the power of selection and could choose good or evil.

Second, man abused his high estate. His power of selection, his ability to choose good or evil—his greatest endowment—eventually became the cause of his undoing. Essentially sin is the misuse, the misdirection, or the waste of man's freedom. Even a casual glance at life teaches us that man's rational power enables him to live in a garden of peace, or it causes him to be the denizen of a world in shambles. We may speculate about the ultimate cause of evil in the world, but in our quietest moments we only know that it is here. We may theorize about Satan, Baal, and Beelzebub, but regardless of the nature of the father of evil, the hellhounds of his awful progeny are all around us. The one thing we know is that evil is self-evident, because we ourselves are men of unclean lips and we live in the midst of a people of unclean lips. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way."

Third, the consequences of sin are inescapable. Regardless of the ultimate cause of sin, we are forced to confront its effects. There are means of punishing sin. This is a moral as well as a physical universe, and moral law cannot be violated with impunity. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Adam and Eve felt shame. They were conscious that they had done that which was evil in the sight of God; they tried to hide their faces from him—and this action itself was a form of punishment; they paid the penalty for their blunder; the effects of their sin extended to their succeeding generations.

Sin, once committed, passes out of man's control, like a bullet



fired from a high-powered rifle. Misdirected power is no respecter of persons; it wounds the just and the unjust, even for countless generations. "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit," said Jesus. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." We have a bumper crop of the fruits of sin. A large percentage of the human family are in the outer darkness of deprivation, disease, social slavery, and personal slothfulness. No human being, however, can escape the inescapable God. The psalmist felt this when he said: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

Life is real. God is the master of his own garden. We can no more escape him than we can escape the atmosphere about us. Once we have tried to hide ourselves behind a blot of sin, in some way or other he will say: "Where art thou? What hast thou done? Thou and thy children shall pay the penalty."

*Removing Evil*

I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness.

For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

—ROMANS 6:19-23

EVIL IS SELF-EVIDENT. ITS PERVERTING AND DEVASTATING EFFECTS upon body, mind, and spirit can be discovered easily on every hand. Jesus revealed means of escaping this insatiable ogre which constantly preys upon human life and mangles human happiness.

He revealed that we must be conscious of personal and social evil. He was conscious of the blights upon man and society. Al-

though he had never succumbed to temptation, he was moved with compassion for those who were in the clutches of evil. He saw the moral perverts, the social outcasts, and the spiritual paupers. To Jesus, who knew the hypocritical Pharisee and the famished beggar alike, evil was not a theory to be discussed but a force to be destroyed.

Jesus also indicated that man himself is expected to employ his own capacity and all the other resources at his command to prevent and to eliminate evils. We shall do very little to remove evil until we discover its hideous presence. For illustration, slavery in America, born of commercialism and prolonged through prejudice, was stamped out only when its ugliness was revealed. When the light of human intelligence was turned upon mental patients, they began to receive scientific and humane treatment. Diseases have been controlled according as medical science has discovered their causes and the methods of prevention and cure.

Men and women of the ages have often responded to the highest good they knew and have used their intellectual and material goods in removing evil. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Kant have elevated man with their great philosophical ideas. Bach, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Handel have inspired men by their great musical productions. Da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Hunt have given men of all walks of life an appreciation of beauty. Shakespeare, Browning, Milton, and Tennyson have enriched men's lives with their poetic expressions of truth. Moses, Hosea, Isaiah, and Paul have fed men with the spiritual bread of Life. Pasteur, Jenner, and Long have performed modern medical miracles to relieve human suffering. Such men made use of their powers to work and to wait as they strove to remove evil from

the world. It should be remembered that Jane Addams did not deal in idle sentiment concerning the slums—she built Hull House; Booker T. Washington had no “wailing wall” for his ignorant Negro brothers—he founded Tuskegee Institute. Nor have the great philanthropists simply felt sorry for unfortunate people—they have ministered to the poor, built great educational institutions, and given the means to carry healing to almost every portion of the world. A man has a right to pray, “Thy will be done,” when he has consecrated his own powers to the end of human righteousness and happiness.

Finally, Jesus revealed that we must rely upon the grace of God. Although man can remove evils, God forgives sins. It is by the grace of God, made understandable in Jesus, that men are freed from the pressure of a sense of guilt, assured of eternal security, and given a new lease on life here and now. Jesus never hesitated to say, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” The Christ himself stands at the very center of the meaning of life.

The grace of God, as revealed in Jesus, is greater than the little systems of men. As Coates has fitly said, “Christ’s truth . . . shines by its own light.” When this perfect light shines upon the conscience of a man, he can say with the Samaritans: “Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.” Now we see through a glass darkly, but in Christ we know that “the Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. . . . He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he

removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.”

God always hears a man when he prays, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” We know that he does, because one day Jesus heard a man pray that prayer.

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## *An Adventurous Fa*

For the time will come when they will  
doctrine; but after their own lusts shall  
selves teachers, having itching ears;

And they shall turn away their ears to  
shall be turned unto fables.

But watch thou in all things, endure  
work of an evangelist, make full proof of

For I am now ready to be offered, and  
parture is at hand.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished  
have kept the faith.

--I

ANY PERSON WHO EARNESTLY AND PERSISTENTLY  
expect to suffer intellectual and spiritual  
horizon will become enlarged, his perspective  
of values modified, and his faith transformed  
at the end of the course of his life, writes  
wisdom to his young friend Timothy. In  
Timothy—and to us—two pearls of wisdom

Paul tells Timothy, first, that men will turn  
will seek teachers who have done likewise

ous pitfalls. We need that word of caution  
ldish conceptions of the universe, of man, of  
on are justifiably tested as by fire. As we  
ence, the vastness of space and time makes  
se a punctured balloon. The relation of  
an perplexes us. Our utopian conceptions of  
when we confront beastly ideologies appear-  
essions, and government. We realize that  
religious organizations are not perfect. The  
ween science and religion disturbs us. Some  
osy-pink glasses so that we may read even  
v. And when we do read intelligently, we  
s of creation, find glaring weaknesses in our  
nd balk at some of the conceptions of God  
ent Hebrews. We wonder how a God who  
perfect wisdom, justice, and love could de-  
women and children, institute a law which  
ghter to be sold into slavery, cause the death  
a generous impulse touched the ark of the  
frequently change his mind. Moreover, as  
arnage, injustice, and suffering, we wonder  
and all-powerful God is silent. The pains  
growth from intellectual childhood to man-  
ciating.

Timothy to fight a good fight and keep the  
opposition of false teaching and personal  
nt, having himself passed from youth to ma-  
r who knew the seriousness of intellectual  
self had contended with perverters of the

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truth, he bore the scars of a cruel world, and he had developed and kept a sound faith. His was an adventurous faith. By his own word and deed, then, Paul says to us that we should develop a sturdy spiritual body. The body of our character should bespeak our faith in God. We should, therefore, be sincere, and never wear the garb of dishonesty and hypocrisy. We should be pure in heart, so that we can grasp the finer golden threads of the truth. We should be intelligent, in order that we may be ready to apprehend the difference between God's truths and man's opinions. We must have a willingness to work, in order that we may separate the wheat of the essential facts about life, soul, personality, and God from the chaff of cant, rote, and sterile creeds. We should, as sons of God, cling to a sound faith in our heavenly Father.

"To have such sinews of character will," as Olin T. Binkley says, "enable one to escape from weakness to strength, from aimlessness to purpose, from anxiety to peace . . . from loneliness to companionship, from darkness to light, from death to life, from the trivial to the significant, from the temporal to the eternal."



*What Doest Thou Here?*

And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake:

And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

—I KINGS 19:9-12

THIS DRAMATIC STORY OF ELIJAH HAS A UNIVERSAL APPEAL FOR thoughtful men. Under circumstances similar to those in which the prophet found himself, we find ourselves reacting as he did. We can learn much, therefore, from the manner in which God dealt with Elijah.

The scriptural account shows that Elijah lived in a world socially morbid and religiously decadent. The government was steered by unscrupulous people; religion was made a canker of paganism by the prophets of Baal. Elijah felt himself to be a divinely called prophet, and so he had tried to remedy the prevailing conditions. He was a prophet of righteousness, an interpreter of the mind of God, and a servant for God's sake. But he learned that, because of his position and efforts, Jezebel planned to kill him.

We find ourselves today in a similar world. In spite of our ambitions and hopes, it seems that the forces of evil are against us and that the underpinnings of civilization are crumbling beneath us. Business is blighted by unprecedented taxation and regimentation; democracy is in mortal combat with despotism; cash values stifle idealism; pragmatic education supplants culture; Christian leadership appears to be complacent; the Baalish influence of secular interests perverts the true worship of God. Elijah was afraid, and he ran away. We also are frightened and want to escape. But to us, as to Elijah who ran away, the voice of God is unmistakable: "What doest thou here?"

Again, Elijah, living in a sick world, became discouraged. Amid the tempest he felt like crying out, "All is lost!" He felt that the prophets of God were useless, that the altars of God were destroyed, that his ideals were hopeless, and that he himself was a failure and an outcast. He was so despondent that he prayed to God to let him die. And how we can sympathize with him! In the face of apparently overwhelming odds, we say, "What is the use?" Totalitarianism suppresses justice and makes the world run with fresh blood; political trickery caricatures democ-

racy, and pawns human rights; religious leaders flee into the wilderness of cults, such as sanctificationism, Rutherfordism, Buchmanism, and premillennialism; God appears to have become an unknown reality. We have seen some men resigned to fatalism, others bitter with prejudice, and still others weeping in despair. Indeed, wind, earthquake, and fire encompass us, and in the midst of such chaos we fail to hear the voice of God.

But as Elijah later waited patiently upon the Lord, his soul was renewed. He then heard the still small voice of the Lord, saying, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" He did not hear the voice of God in the turmoil of the despair of his mind, but in the quietness of his reflections. Thus he realized that Jehovah is God, that a host of people had not bowed to Baal, that he himself was shirking his obligations, and that a great work awaited him—the task of selecting a religious leader for the coming generation. Elijah therefore arose to perform his manly duty, and again he began the work of a man in the name of God. The gauntlet is today thrown squarely before us. Shall we, in fear and despondency, seek a cave, pray to die, do nothing? Or shall we listen to the still small voice of hope and faith, and quit ourselves like Christian men in a chaotic world? In our quiet, reflective moments the still small voice may be heard, saying, as it did to Elijah, "What doest thou here?"

## *Christ's Standard for Man*

For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

For every tree is known by his own fruit: for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

—LUKE 6:43-45

CHRIST CALLED TWELVE YOUNG MEN TO BE HIS SPECIAL STUDENTS. HE intended to place the task of the ages in their hands. He knew that if these men became successful leaders they would need to develop perfection of character, and that the light of such integrity would manifest itself in a blameless outward righteousness. Thoughtful people who desire a leading part in the great drama called life should, therefore, ponder the high standard that Jesus set for us.

Jesus taught his disciples that they should become perfect in character. He insisted that they avail themselves of the well of life-giving power that springs from a faithful love for God, a

compassionate love for people, and an insatiable hunger and thirst for righteousness. Jesus spoke in winged words of the conditions of Christian character, and he revealed its indispensable attributes as purity of heart, humility of mind, and all-inclusiveness of love. Jesus excels the idealism of all philosophers when he demands that we be perfect, even as our heavenly Father is perfect. In plain language he shows that human perfection excludes the poisons of hate, envy, covetousness, and retaliation. A master physician, he points to ignorance, arrogance, false pride, and hypocrisy as symptoms of deep-seated maladies of integrity. Jesus himself bespeaks the very antithesis of these evils. He expects his followers to love, to be wise, to be humble, to be meek, to be temperate, to forgive, to seek reconciliation, and to be spiritually hungry. To do this, Jesus knew, a man must be clearly aware of the reality of God and keep in constant touch with him. Jesus knew that such bedrock convictions and helpful relations give a man an unshakable foundation, and that such beams and bolts of spirituality hold him together in times of privation, anxiety, grief, and persecution. Jesus showed that a life which does not possess the inner stamina of Christian character is no more than a flimsy structure built on a foundation of sand.

Again, Jesus taught his disciples that inward perfection will manifest itself in a blameless outward righteousness. He said, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good." Christian love and righteous action are the spontaneous desire of the man who clings to God and has reverence for human life. Such a man will practice modesty and humility—his right hand will not know what his left hand is doing. He will not willfully do another man an injustice, nor will he

degrade his own personality, for he respects not only himself, but also other men as he does himself. In the language of philosophy, his ideal will be: "Always act so that you can will the maxim or determining principle of your action to become universal law; act so that you can will that everybody shall follow the principle of your action. . . . Act so as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal and never as a means." He will adopt the Golden Rule, that is, he will put himself in the other man's place, understand his weaknesses, be aware of his temptations, sympathize with his feelings, and adjust himself to his limitations. He will seek "the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and these characteristics of inner nobility will be added unto him.

The man who marches under the unfurled standards of Christ can justly be called a great man, because he is a good man.

## *Jesus and the Will of God*

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

—ROMANS 12:1-2

TO DISCOVER THE WILL OF GOD IS OUR HIGHEST PRIVILEGE, GREATEST need, and finest source of strength. As Dante says, "In his will is our peace." Five clear suggestions come to us from Jesus himself, who knew the perfect will of God.

First, Jesus used common sense in reflecting about life. He knew that a house built on sand could not withstand stress, that a builder should first count the cost, and that a human life is worth vastly more than an ox. Sane judgment and the divine will are consistent; man, therefore, must allow God's will to be manifested through the lawful working of the human mind. Reason teaches, for illustration, that the world does not owe us a living, and that God does not reward slothfulness, stupidity, and littleness with prosperity, culture, and character. An intelligent man knows that right is better than wrong, that justice is more

desirable than injustice, that honesty is superior to dishonesty, that self-control is more constructive than license, and that love is more blessed than hate.

Second, Jesus devoted his life to honest work. He worked hard during the thirty silent years, as well as during his active ministry. Jesus dignified labor and revealed the Father as the worker of the vineyard. He said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Moreover, he chose busy men for his disciples. The monks of Cluny spoke aright in their conviction that "To labor is to pray." The world's finest characters are those who work with devotion and diligence. Honest labor, therefore, is essentially holy exercise, and it is to him who labors that the will of God becomes clearest. As Carlyle says, then, "Man's first problem is to discover the work he should do."

Third, Jesus discovered the difference between appearance and reality. He never mistook an echo for a voice, or a shadow for a substance. Paul declared that the "things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." If, therefore, we do not believe that life consists of more than that which we can see with our eyes, handle with our hands, and prove by mathematics, we are in poor condition to know the good and perfect will of God. This great truth each of us, as he passes from intellectual youth to maturity, must learn for himself. As John Locke exclaimed, we "may as well hope to see with other men's eyes as to know with other men's understanding." And it follows that when one apprehends the truth for himself, he will be impelled by it. Jesus showed the intimate relation between doing and knowing. Hear him: "If any man will do his will, he shall know."



Fourth, Jesus loved men because they were men. He used the parable of the lost sheep, the story of the good Samaritan, the devotion of the father of the prodigal son, the graphic picture of Lazarus and Dives, and the description of the last judgment to show God's love for man and God's will that men shall love one another. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" We must love men, therefore, not from a sense of duty and not for hope of gain, but because they are human beings. If we love men spontaneously, compassionately, and intelligently, as Jesus loved them, we have attained unto a great portion of the will of God.

Finally, Jesus never compromised his faith in the truth and righteousness of God. In the face of temptation and agony beyond description in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, and on the cross, Jesus held fast to his faith. Supported by the will of God as manifested in his own common sense, his devotion to his life's purpose, his profound understanding of life, and his all-inclusive love for men, Jesus could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Jesus is the will of God made plain to men. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed. . . . How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"